3 Army soldiers killed in latest ceasefire violation

Story on PAGE A2

Post-ROTC program goes hi-tech at UST

MAKABULUHAN NA, PROTEKTADO PA AKO!

By Christian V. Esguerra

RESCUE victims. Care for the old. Teach in the slums. Or replace the trees Bayani Fernando is planning to uproot along Katipunan Avenue in

POST-ROTC/ A17

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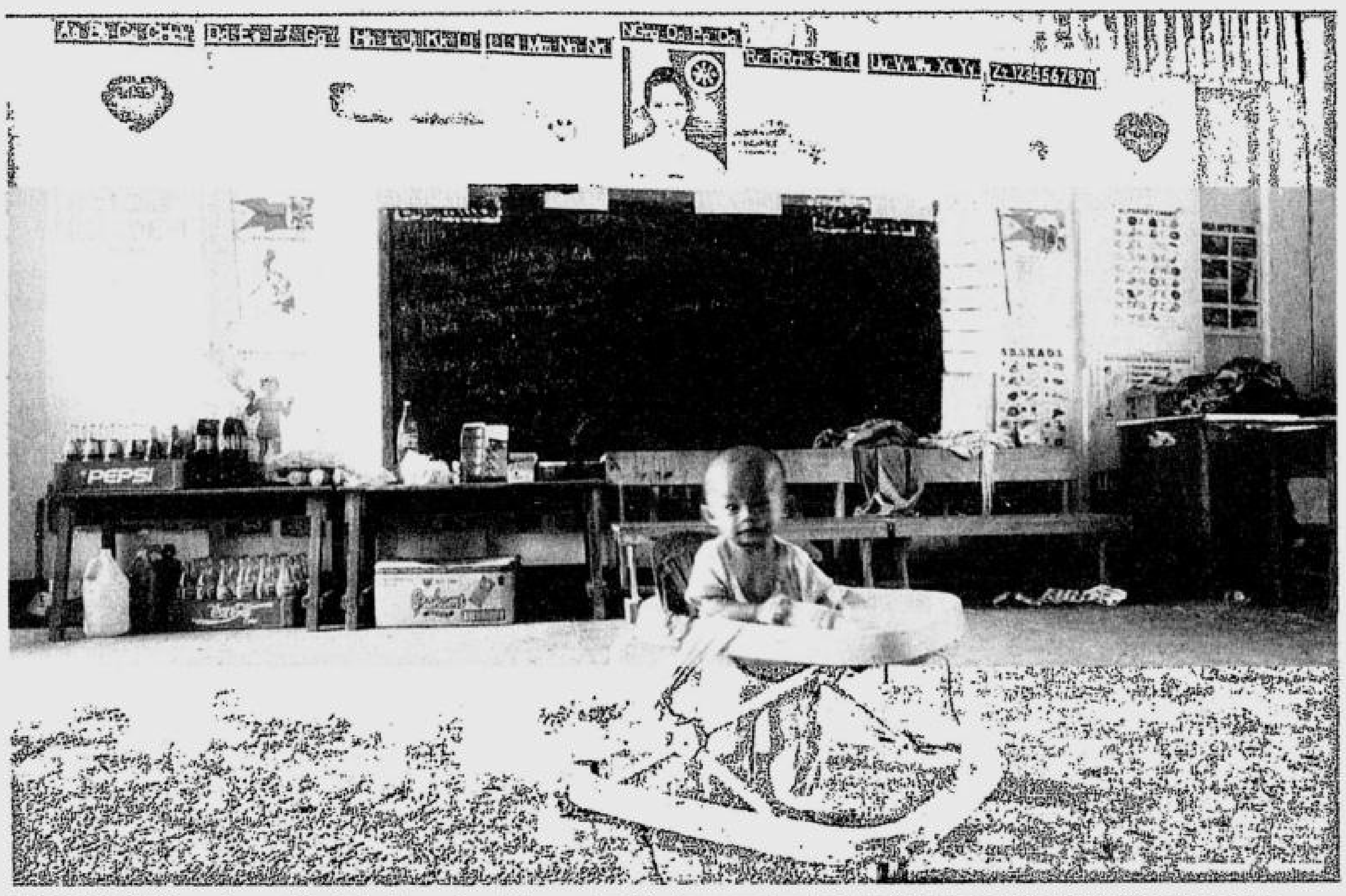
Monday, June 9, 2003 ★★ 74 pages / 7 sections / vol. 18 / no. 181 P15

Sex raps vs Bacani shock churchgoers

BISHOP Teodoro Bacani: Some churchgoers wept when his letter was read during Sunday Mass.
PDI PHOTO

Militant women's group urges Church investigation


THE STUDENTS may be ready for today's opening of classes, but this classroom is not as it is still being occupied by families displaced by fighting between government soldiers and Moro rebels in Munai, Lanao del Norte.
EDWIN BACASMAS

MANY churchgoers were shocked and awed upon learning yesterday that Catholic Bishop Teodoro Bacani allegedly sexually molested a woman on his staff in the Diocese of Novaliches in Metro Manila.

Some openly cried when Bacani's letter in which he said he "was deeply sorry for the consequences of any inappropriate expression of affection to my secretary" was read in church, according to an Associated Press report.

Bacani also said in the letter that he was ready to leave the diocese if necessary.

"They were shocked. Everybody was shocked and I myself cried. Many of us were hurt, but that was our gut reaction. Nothing has been proven," Rev. Romulo Rañada, spokesperson of Bacani, who is known for his ready smile and charisma, told AP.

But the militant women's group Gabriela said "no Filipina can ever muster the courage to come out and accuse a Catholic bishop of sexual harassment if it is not true."

Gabriela was referring to the 34-year-old woman who has rocked the Catholic hierarchy by accusing Bacani of sexually harassing her.

The woman, who has resigned as Bacani's secretary, claimed that Bacani, 63, made sexual advances to her twice, the most recent of which was in March.

"In a culture like ours, it's highly unlikely for a woman to come out in the open and claim that she's been harassed," Emmi de Jesus, Gabriela secretary general, told the INQUIRER.

"Often, it's the woman who suffers and bears the stigma in the end.

SEX RAPS/ A18

Bishop off to US, leaves fate to Vatican

By Norman Bordadora and Christian V. Esguerra

THE CATHOLIC Church is bracing for the decision of the Vatican on the case of Bishop Teodoro Bacani, who has been accused of sexual harassment by his former secretary.

Msgr. Romulo Rañada, Bacani's spokesperson, told the INQUIRER last night that the investigation by the Papal Nuncio, the Pope's representative in Manila, would "hopefully" be over when Bacani wrapped up his three-week visit to the United States.

"It could be decided in the next few weeks although there is no time frame for that," Rañada said when asked about the Vatican's decision.

He noted that Bacani was leaving his fate up to the Church. "For my part, I have put myself in the hands of the Church, ready to leave the diocese if necessary for her good," Bacani said in a letter dated June 7.

But Bacani said the sex scandal would not force him to leave the Novaliches diocese.

In an interview Saturday night with the Church-owned Radyo Veritas, Bacani asked the media to go slow on releasing reports that he had already resigned. "They might be 'bum steered' (*kuryente* in journalism parlance)," he told the anchor.

Bacani pleaded for the public

BISHOP/ A17

Education in South also war casualty

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

FIGHTING in parts of Mindanao has claimed untold casualties in life and property, but it has also taken its toll on education, especially in the three regions most affected by the conflict.

The debilitating effect will continue to be felt long after the last shot has been fired.

According to a study on the status of education in Mindanao, commissioned by the Philippine Business for Social Progress and conducted by Myra Tanada-Medina, Mindanao posted the lowest score in virtually all education indicators.

Only 88 percent of the Mindanao population, for instance, can read and write. In comparison, the rate is 95.14 percent in Luzon and 91.97 percent in the Visayas.

One reason: Regions 9 (Western Mindanao) and 12 (Soccksargen) and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao sent the fewest number of elementary school-age children to school in

EDUCATION/ A18

No more classes under a tree for students on Romblon island

By Dona Pazzibugan

FIVE years ago, a high school in San Fernando, on Sibuyan Island in Romblon, was holding classes under a tree—literally.

The Don Carlos M. Megias Memorial National High School did not have a single classroom for its 152 students and three teachers when it started in 1998.

Today, most of its classrooms are still makeshift, and located on a site that does not even belong to the school.

But thanks to the community's painstaking efforts, when the school's 1,000 students return to school this week, some of them will have actual classrooms to go to.

Nazarene Romano, 32, one of the school's first teachers, said their first classrooms were the municipal library, the municipal auditorium, the gymnasium and whatever rooms were available in the town's public elementary school.

When the municipal government needed the auditorium, they had to move out.

That's how they found themselves holding classes under the biggest tree they could find, he recalled.

Eventually, the town's Megias family donated a 6,000-sq.m. property to be used as a school site. Because of disagreements over the terms of the donation, however, the land title has still not been officially transferred to the Department of Education.

The DepEd built its first classroom on the site in 2000. It built another one the next year.

The municipal government also built two classrooms, though

NO MORE/ A20

No bath, no entry in schools

By Christian V. Esguerra

NO bath, no access to public schools.

Interior Undersecretary Eduardo Soliman said yesterday that elementary and high school students of public schools (a total of about 17.5 million) must take a bath before they could go to classes.

Soliman said this requirement, along with a ban on spitting in schools, was necessary to keep the virus causing Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) at bay.

"The measures may seem tough but they're for the good of everybody," he said.

Maintaining proper hygiene and keeping the surroundings clean at all times will be the focus of the weeklong SARS prevention seminar for all public school students and their parents beginning today. Formal lessons will start next Monday, June 16.

Soliman, along with health, education, and interior and local government officials, had trained some 250 public school teachers to spearhead the SARS lectures nationwide.

The government sponsored the crash course on SARS prevention for the teachers amid the hysteria that gripped the country following the deaths of Adela Catalon and her father Mauricio in April.

The mysterious flu-like disease has claimed 770 lives and afflicted 8,400 people worldwide, most of them in Hong Kong, China and

NO BATH/ A20

READY FOR RITES
As the Independence Day celebration approaches, Philippine flags can be seen fluttering proudly all over Manila.
ERIK ARAZAS

Grumbling goes on despite RP growth

PHILIPPINE economic growth has exceeded expectations, inflation has fallen, the stock market has hit 11-month highs and even the perennial budget deficit problem may be coming under control.

But foreign investors and even administration senators are still grumbling, dimming the reflected glow infused by the latest positive economic figures on President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Gross domestic product (GDP) had expanded 4.5 percent from a year earlier in the three months to March, hitting the high end of official targets. Domestic demand was the main driver amid a difficult global economic environment, boosting the Macapagal administration's confidence it would achieve its full-year GDP growth target of between 4.2 and 5.2 percent.

The annualized inflation rate for May fell to 2.7 percent, raising hopes the overall inflation rate for 2003 would range between 3.0 and 3.5 percent, down from official projections of 4.5 to 5.5 percent.

The news has encouraged foreign investors to reenter the stock market, propelling the Philippine Stock Exchange composite index to an 11-month high of 1,165.86 points on Thursday.

"Foreign investors have been in buying mode," said Ron Rodrigo of Accord Capital Equities. "They see that most of our economic data, such as the deficit and GDP ... is well within what the government had set out to achieve."

Analysts also credit signs of a US rebound and indications that the Philippines has escaped the

GRUMBLING/ A19

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme Northern Luzon will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/06/09/03

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

3 soldiers slain in latest truce violation

By Martin Marfil

MILF rebels shot dead three soldiers in violation of a unilateral ceasefire the Moro Islamic Liberation Front declared a week ago, the Armed Forces said yesterday.

Reports from the military said the soldiers were killed while several others were wounded in an ambush in Munai, Lanao del Norte last Saturday.

The rebels confirmed the firefight but said the violence was provoked by an army attack on their positions. "This was a defensive action. They entered our area after bombing our positions and we had no alternative but to fight back," MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu told Reuters by phone.

The military reported the encounter on the eve of the President's five-day visit to Mindanao.

The fighting was the first major incident of violence between soldiers and the MILF since the rebel group began a unilateral 10-day ceasefire on June 2.

A military statement said the attack was "clearly a violation" of the ceasefire.

According to a report reaching Army chief Lt. Gen. Gregorio Camiling, members of the 9th Infantry Battalion were on their way to Barangay Basak, Munai when they were fired upon by MILF rebels.

The wounded troops were brought to the Camp Evangelista station hospital in Cagayan de Oro City, while those killed were brought to funeral homes.

This was the third clash since the unilateral ceasefire started.

Two other clashes occurred in Upi, Maguindanao and Pikit, North Cotabato on the first and third days of the ceasefire.

The MILF made the truce offer to encourage the government to reopen stalled peace talks. But the government has refused to reciprocate. It has also accused the rebels of mounting several attacks on military positions, allegedly proving that the MILF was not sincere in seeking peace.

In a radio interview yesterday, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said if the MILF can prove their sincerity, "then the government is ready with the counteroffer of a permanent ceasefire for the eventual forging of a final peace agreement." But he said Malacañang would consult with military commanders first to see if the rebels had indeed refrained from attacking government troops.

Meanwhile, the AFP foiled another attempt by some MILF elements to put up a camp in Munai town.

Reports reaching Camp Aguinaldo said the new MILF camp was discovered on June 6 when troops of the 9th Infantry Battalion stumbled upon the structures which were under construction in Basak, Munai.

The structures, which could have housed 60 rebels, were believed to have been abandoned three days before.

Munai is said to be a former MILF stronghold which fell to government hands recently.

It was said to have been held by MILF units under the command of Commander Bravo or Abdurahman Macapaar, which figured in earlier raids on civilian targets.

Bravo is being hunted by the government, which has launched "punitive actions" against him. *With reports from AFP, Reuters*

Nene pushes US role in peace talks

By Michael Lim Ubac and Norman Bordadora

OPPOSITION Sen. Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel Jr. yesterday pressed his plan to involve the United States in the Mindanao peace process.

He slammed the Left for opposing US-brokered peace talks, and said there was growing support in Mindanao for US involvement.

"What is their solution?" asked Pimentel, reacting to a statement issued by a militant group opposing any US role in the peace talks.

"If the US will not be tapped to help in the peace process, then they would come in as warriors (under) the guise of Balikatan military exercises," Pimentel said.

He pointed out that a "groundswell of support" for US mediation was evident in Mindanao. Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad had offered to broker the peace talks.

But he also said US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone had told him that the United States wanted to ease itself into the process, but it "doesn't want Malaysia to get slighted . . . by its presence in Mindanao."

But Foreign Secretary Blas Ople said Libya and other members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference were not in favor of US participation in peace negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Ople said the OIC prefers a peace process mediated by Malaysia. "Some countries, like Libya, are wary of Western powers such as the United States taking part in the peace process with the MILF," Ople said in a news conference late last week.

Ople was the highest-ranking Philippine official ever invited to attend the OIC's annual meeting of foreign ministers.

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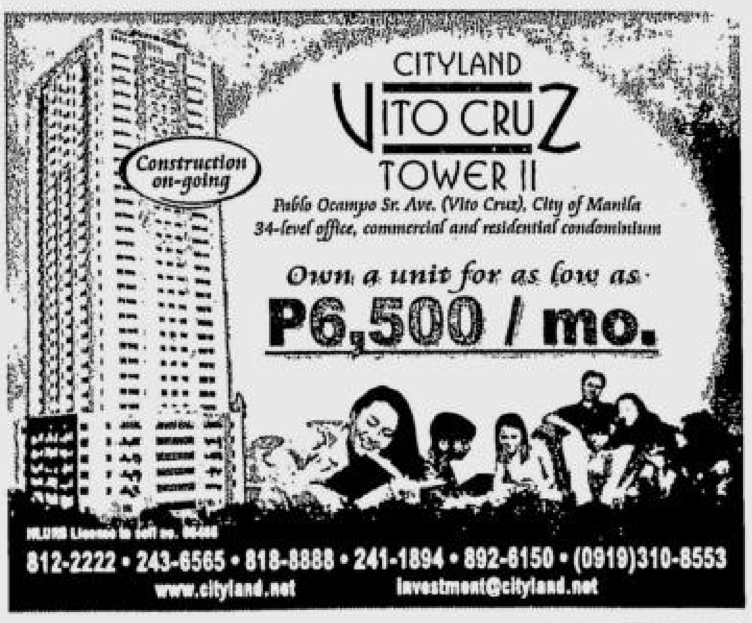

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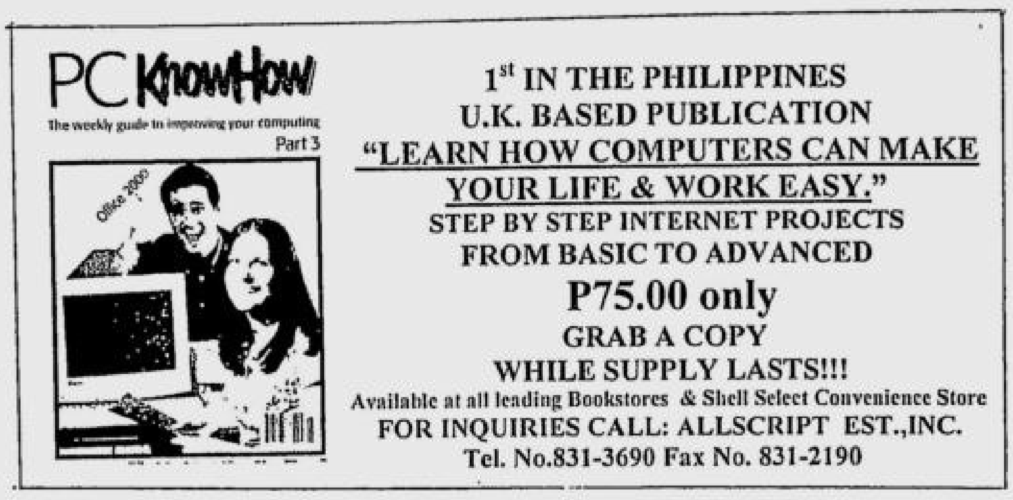

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RP ready to face North Korea on nukes, says Ople

By Norman Bordadora

THE PHILIPPINES will express the country's interest in a nuclear-free Korean peninsula to North Korea, when Foreign Affairs Secretary Blas Ople flies to that communist nation.

Ople has accepted the invitation of North Korean Foreign Minister Pack Nam Sun to visit Pyongyang and will convey the Philippines' desire for "a peaceful, stable and non-nuclear Korean peninsula."

Ople said he had extensive discussions with South Korean officials on the reported proliferation of North Korea's nuclear arms, during an official visit to South Korea last month and during President Macapagal-Arroyo's recent state visit to that country. He said he is now ready to meet with North Korean officials on the matter of nuclear arms.

"We continue to have an important stake in the peace and stability of the Korean peninsula. The President is personally committed to a foreign policy geared towards that achievement," Ople said.

"I intend to use dialogue and diplomacy and enjoin all efforts to decrease tensions and to encourage peaceful dialogue in the area," he added.

Ople said one important step toward this goal would be to remove the "static" in the lines of communication between North Korea and the United States. The US views North Korea as a major threat to peace and stability not only in Asia, but the world. North Korea claims it needs the nuclear arms because it feels threatened by the West.

"There has been too much rhetoric going back and forth. There is a need to highlight the interests of the other stakeholders. These matters I hope to address when I visit North Korea," Ople said.

Paek had personally invited Ople to North Korea when they held a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the Non-Aligned Movement summit last February.

Ople said the Philippines will also actively pursue the idea of giving the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) a bigger role in helping ease tensions in the Korean peninsula, possibly through a resolution.

He said he would bring the matter up during the Asean Foreign Ministers and Related Meetings in Cambodia from June 12 to 19.

Nani is back, but as what?

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

PRESS Secretary Hernani "Nani" Braganza is reporting back to work today after a two-month leave for medical reasons.

But he is keeping everyone guessing as to what his new job will be.

"As press secretary," replied Braganza, when asked yesterday what post he would assume when he reports back to Malacañang.

Braganza refused to comment on reports he would soon be taking over as presidential adviser on political affairs from Joey Rufino. He would only say that something was being worked out.

Earlier this week, while in Tokyo, Japan, President Macapagal-Arroyo said the former congressman from Pangasinan could have any post he wanted when he returned from his leave.

A source close to the President had said Braganza would be named adviser for political affairs.

Rufino himself just recently returned from a two-month medical leave.

Rufino's official title is presidential liaison officer for political affairs, but he is often referred to as the presidential adviser on political affairs, since he is also executive director of the administration party Lakas, which Ms Macapagal co-chairs.

Rufino yesterday refused to comment on whether he would keep his post, calling the recent reports mere "speculations."

He was initially incredulous when told the President was planning to replace him with Braganza.

Braganza went on leave in April citing his diabetes and related illnesses as the reason. He had offered to resign, but the President refused to accept it.

Although Braganza cited medical reasons for wanting to quit, it was widely believed his open feud with Presidential chief of staff Rigoberto Tiglao was the real reason.

Press Undersecretary for broadcast Milton Alingod is seen as Braganza's replacement.

Alingod was named acting press secretary until May 30, after Braganza was initially expected back on June 1.

Even if he knows what is in store for Braganza, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye yesterday would not let on.

Bunye would not comment on the reports Braganza would be given a new assignment, merely saying the former congressman was welcome to come back.

Braganza, other reports had said, had made too many sacrifices for the Lakas party and the President herself, which was why Ms Macapagal was not keen about letting him go.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, June 9, 2003
10th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 2 Cor 1:1-7
Gospel: Mt 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain. He sat down and his disciples gathered around him. Then he spoke and began to teach them:

Fortunate are those who have the spirit of the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Fortunate are those who mourn, they shall be comforted.

Fortunate are the gentle, they shall possess the land.

Fortunate are those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be satisfied.

Fortunate are the merciful, for they shall find mercy.

Fortunate are those with a pure heart, for they shall see God.

Fortunate are those who work for peace, they shall be called children of God.

Fortunate are those who are persecuted for the cause of justice, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Fortunate are you, when people insult you and persecute you and speak all kinds of evil against you because you are my followers. Be glad and joyful, for a great reward is kept for you in God. This is how this people persecuted the prophets who lived before you.

Commentary

As one stands on the slopes of the hills that surround the Lake of Galilee in springtime, one is surrounded by immense beauty. The harp-shaped lake is calm but underneath it is teeming with fish, life for the local fishermen. Wild flowers bright with various colors swathe the green landscape. Trees begin to bloom and the birds dancing on their branches sing their sweet songs. Seeds newly planted begin to sprout watered by the gentle rain. It must be on one such day that Jesus climbed up the mountain to proclaim the beatitudes. He led his audience to realize the Father's care and love eloquently proclaimed by nature. Then they could appreciate how blessed they are even when stripped of the trappings of wealth, power, fame. They are blessed simply because they are children of God.

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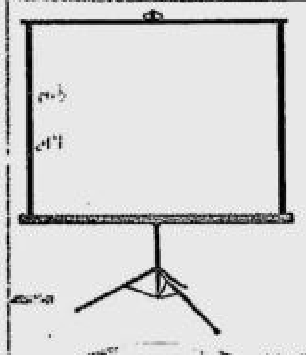
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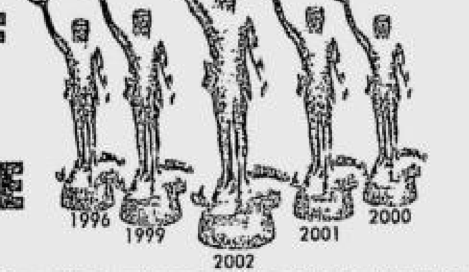
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After MILF, GMA trains sights on peace talks with Reds

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo Saturday told a visiting official from Norway that the government wants the peace talks with Filipino communist rebels "to really move forward."

During the courtesy call by Norwegian Foreign Affairs State Secretary Vidar Helgesen, the President thanked the Norwegian government for continuing to offer itself as a third-party facilitator in peace talks between the government and the National Democratic Front, the umbrella organization of the Communist Party of the Philippines and allied groups.

Ms Macapagal also lauded Norway's role in mediating peace negotiations between Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tigers.

"We look (at that) with envy," she said.

According to a Malacañang statement, Ms Macapagal told Helgesen she wanted the peace talks with the NDF to move forward after a lot of time was wasted on "preliminary things."

The peace talks have been suspended for a year now.

Helgesen said Norway was willing to "step up" its input, but asked for a "general willingness" from the government and the NDF to continue the negotiations.

"We need to work with both parties if this is to move forward. It will not be easy but we will work closely with the Filipino people," Helgesen reportedly told the President.

The Palace statement said the President told Helgesen the government was not instituting a full military solution against the communist rebels.

She said the government's policy was to have the military enforce the law, while other agencies addressed poverty and social inequality.

Also present during the visit were presidential advisers Eduardo Ermita and Norberto Gonzales and Presidential Management Staff head Silvestre Afable Jr.

The government recently agreed to resume peace negotiation with the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front in Mindanao. These talks will be brokered by Malaysia, after Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad offered Kuala Lumpur as a venue.

Meanwhile, the group at the forefront of defending the rights of exiled communist leader Jose Maria Sison assailed Dutch authorities anew for ordering his expulsion from the Netherlands. *With Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

LEGAL ETHICS—Lawyer shall hold in trust the moneys of his client—Respondent also failed to comply with the norms embodied in Canon 16 of the Code of Professional Responsibility, to wit: "Canon 16. A lawyer shall hold in trust all moneys and properties of his client that may come into his possession. Rule 16.01—A lawyer shall account for all money or property collected or received for or from the client." In the instant case, respondent received the amount of P10,000 specifically for filing fees in the ejectment case. Thus, he was under the obligation to render an accounting of the same. The highly fiduciary and confidential relation of attorney and client requires that the lawyer should promptly account for all the funds received from, or held by him for, the client. Moreover, a lawyer who obtains possession of the funds and properties of his client in the course of his professional employment shall deliver the same to his client (a) when they become due or (b) upon demand. In the instant case, respondent failed to account and return the P10,000 for the filing fees despite complainant's repeated demands. [Citations omitted.] [Chief Justice Davide, Jr., First Division, Garcia v. Manuel, A. C. No. 5811, Jan. 20] *Digest by R. B. Vera*

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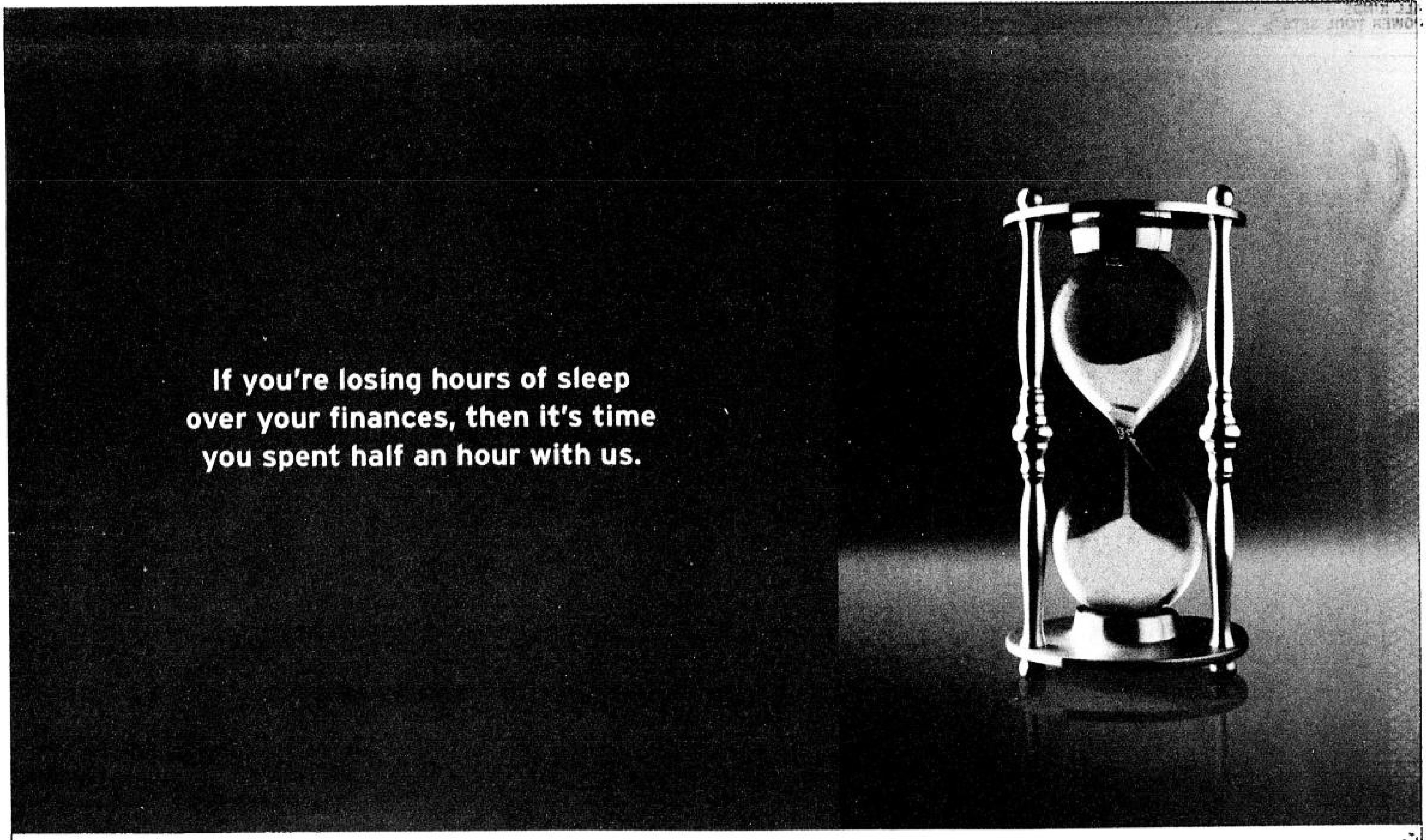
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Don't screen 'pro-US, pro-military film,' militants ask Atienza

ANTI-WAR activists yesterday asked Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and the Manila Film Festival committee not to screen the movie "Operation Balikatan."

The militant group Pamalakaya said the movie appeared to be propaganda for the holding of RP-US joint military exercises, like the Balikatan 03-1 to be staged in Sulu later this year.

"We strongly urge Mayor Atienza and the filmfest committee to recall this pro-US, pro-military entry from commercial exhibition," said Pamalakaya information officer Gerry Albert Corpuz.

"Operation Balikatan," an entry to this year's annual Manila Film Festival on June 11-24, was produced by Premiere Productions. It has an impressive cast headed by award-winning actor-director Eddie Garcia.

Its director Cirio Santiago has described it as an action-packed film comparable to war movies like Antoine Fuqua's "Tears of the Sun" and Ridley Scott's "Black Hawk Down."

He said HBO has bought the rights to the movie and will air it later this year.

But the militants were not impressed.

"The Filipino people are celebrating independence [June 12] from foreign powers, only to be served up a cheap flick intended to glorify the US-staged Balikatan exercises. It is a gross national insult," Corpuz said.

US officials involved in Balikatan themselves have asked for a special screening of the movie, reportedly over apprehensions the film may present a negative view of the military exercises. *Gerald G. Lacuarta*

'1 more reason to quit'

HERE's one more reason to stop smoking: the habit has been implicated in the development and progression of kidney disease in people with conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

Dr. Dinna N. Cruz, a kidney specialist trained at the Yale University School of Medicine who is now with St. Luke's Medical Center, said an estimated 10,000 Filipinos go into kidney failure every year, requiring either dialysis or a kidney transplant to survive.

"It is therefore very important to detect chronic kidney disease in its early stages when lifestyle changes and medication can be prescribed to delay or prevent the progression of the disease," Cruz said.

Cruz is one of the featured speakers at the weekly health forum of the Philippine College of Physicians. Another speaker is radio and TV personality Inday Badiday, herself a kidney patient undergoing dialysis.

Cruz said a recent study suggests that smoking may lead to kidney damage, even in healthy people.

She said men who smoked were three times more likely than non-smokers to have reduced kidney function.

The PCP Health Forum can be heard Tuesdays over dzRB radio at 9-11 a.m.

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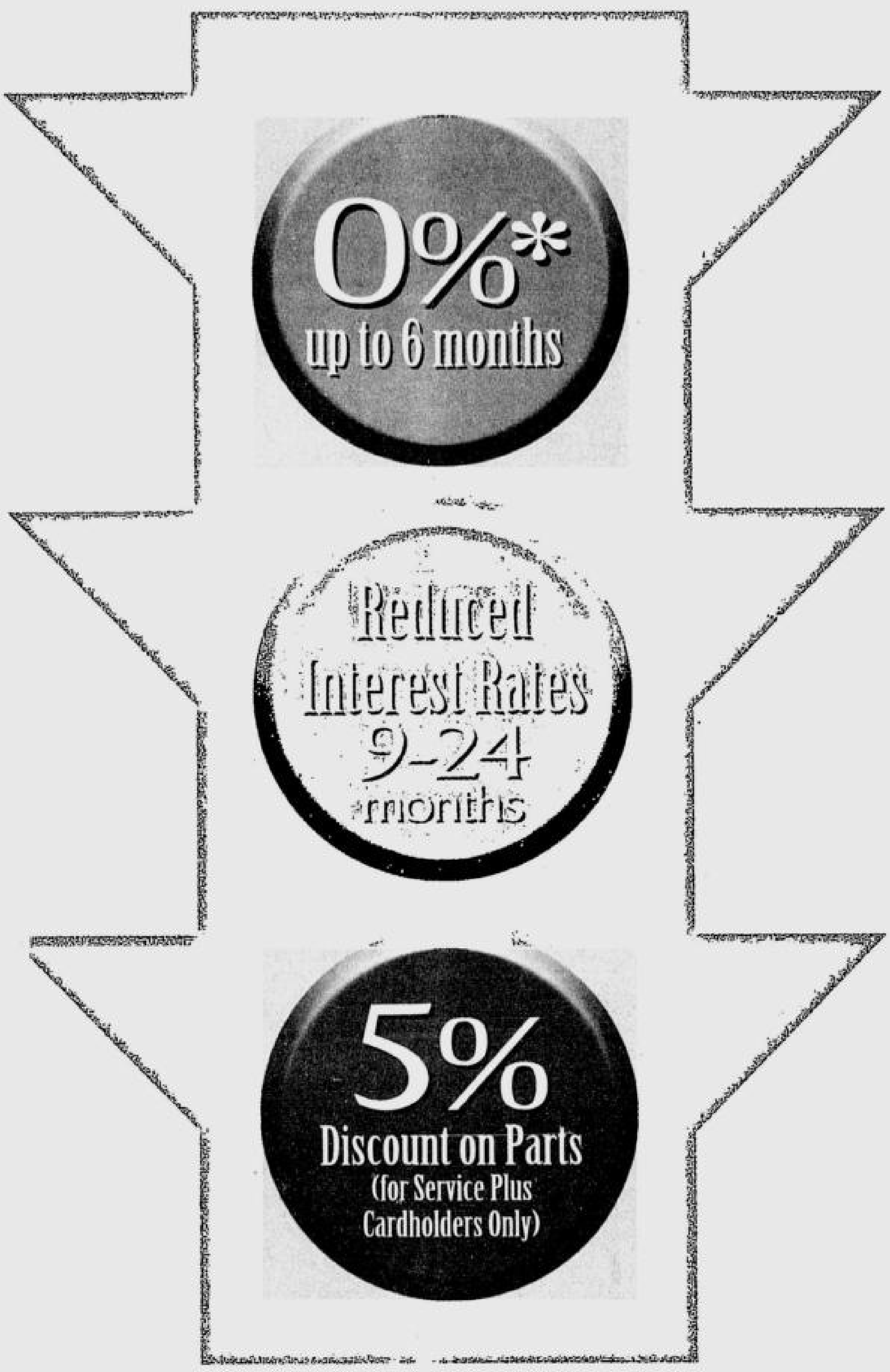
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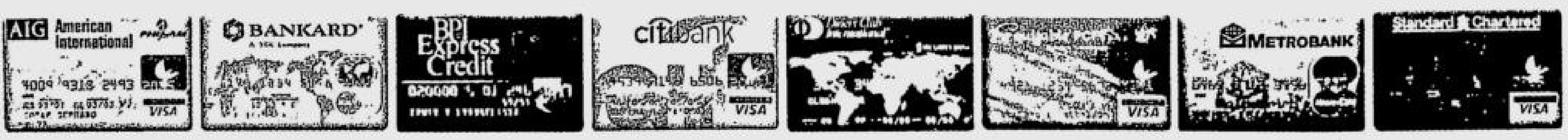

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THE CHANCES of aspiring lawyers passing the bar exams may soon get better.

This after the lawyer-president of the Social Justice Society, a political party, asked the Supreme Court to add one hour to the time allotted to take the exams.

Alcantara, who is also a law professor and bar reviewer, said would-be lawyers have complained to him during his lectures at different bar review centers about "the inability of some of them to complete the tests in the afternoon subjects because of insufficient time." Apparently some of the reviewees had taken the exams before.

"There are only three hours allowed for examinations in the afternoon, one hour less than the time allotted for the morning subjects. On the other hand, the number of questions in the afternoon subjects may be the same as those in the morning subjects," Alcantara said.

"To avoid unfairness, undeserved failure and disqualification, the afternoon exam hours should be increased to four, for example from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m.," he said.

He asked the court to effect the change beginning September, the month the exams are held every year. *Philip C. Tubeza*

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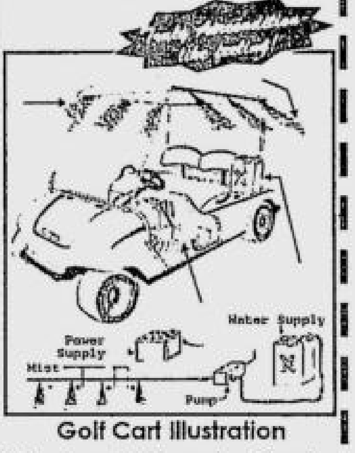

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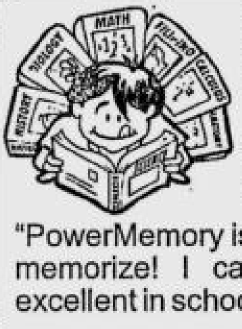

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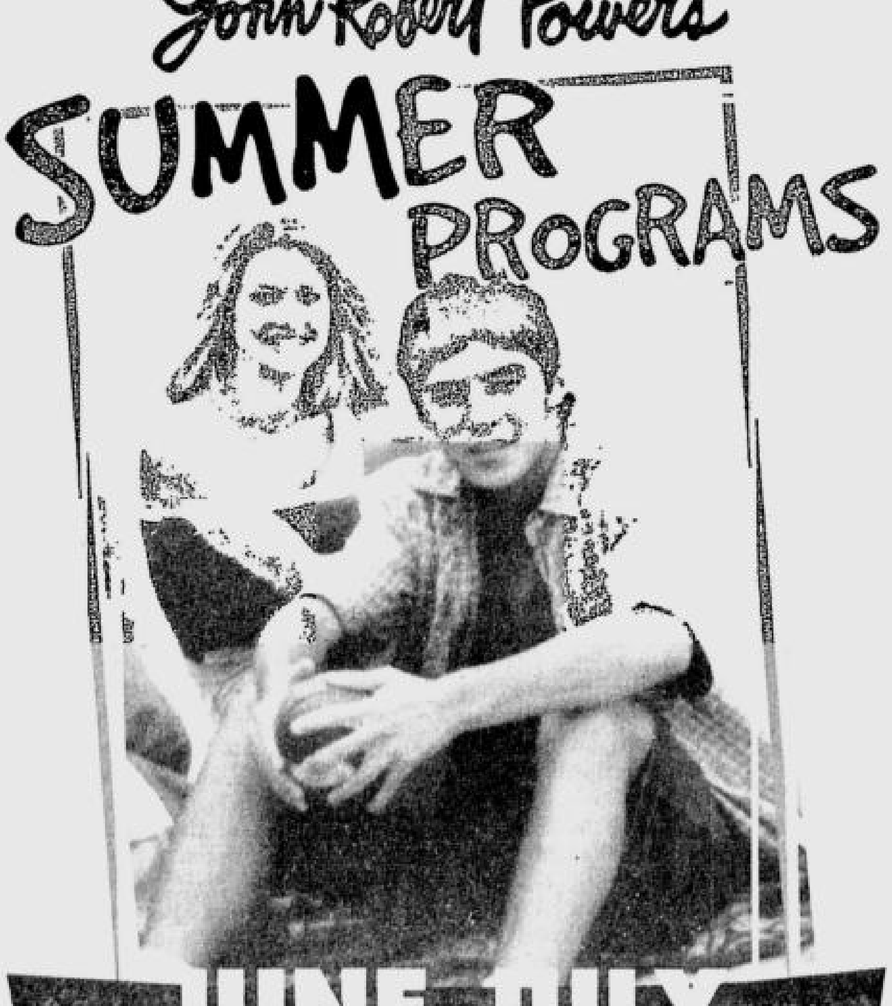

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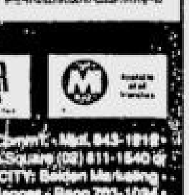

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EDITORIAL

LAST week, on the sidelines of the Tokyo symposium on the future of Asia, the President reached an agreement with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad that will help shape the immediate future of Mindanao.

The two leaders agreed that the Malaysian-brokered peace talks between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front will resume, without preconditions.

"He will continue to help again in the peace process," President Macapagal-Arroyo told reporters at a cocktail reception on Thursday evening. This is welcome news, if rather disingenuous. The Malaysians have never backed away from the peace table they had helped set up; the Macapagal administration, on the other hand, has stormed out of the room every now and then, leaving broken chairs in its wake.

To say that Mahathir will "help again" is to suggest that Kuala Lumpur had ever withheld or suspended its support for the peace process.

Presidential Adviser Norberto Gonzales, the President's controversial point man for negotiations with Moro separatist rebels, has also mastered the art of seeming to say something forthright when he is, in fact, parceling the truth.

"Malaysia is arranging the venue," Gonzales said in Tokyo. But Malaysia has always arranged the venue for the peace talks. Since the Armed Forces launched its Buliok offensive last February, for instance, it has hosted one round of exploratory talks and was ready to host the second when the government, angered by continuing MILF attacks, decided to pull out. The news is not that Kuala Lumpur is arranging the venue—one of its responsibilities as a peace broker—but that Manila has agreed to come back to the room.

Despite being less than completely candid, however, the announcement that peace talks will resume without preconditions is cause for cautious optimism.

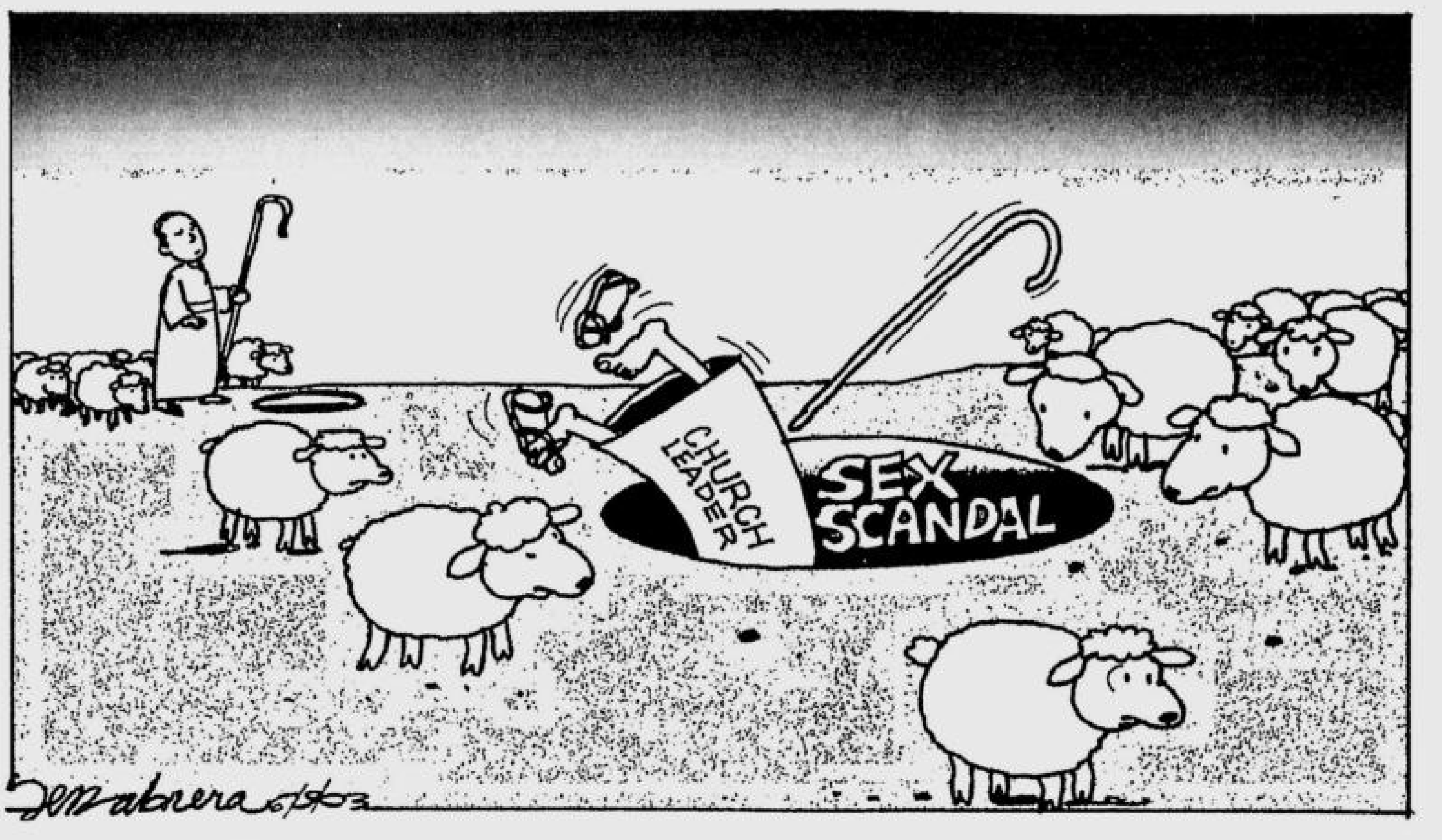
In the first place, this is an example of what peer-to-peer diplomacy can achieve, of the kind of pressure that one head of government can bring to bear on another. Many sectors have called for the resumption of peace talks despite the latest anti-civilian operations of the MILF, because a policy dictated in large part by military contingency will never solve the Moro separatist rebellion. But apparently the President saw the wisdom of continuing negotiations—even though her four preconditions had not all been met—only when Mahathir whispered in her ear.

Secondly, this is a timely reminder that, on the issue of keeping the peace in Mindanao, the national interests of the Philippines and Malaysia now converge. We have many differences with Malaysia, notably with its seeming lack of regard for human rights (witness the callous expulsion of Filipino migrants from Sabah or its treatment of ex-heir apparent Anwar Ibrahim), but in the post-Sept. 11 era, both countries have realized that separatist movements know no borders.

Thirdly, this is a face-saving way for the government to respond in kind to the MILF's unilateral ceasefire, which enters its second week today. The Macapagal administration had originally welcomed the truce offer, but rejected it after yet another MILF attack. The Tokyo agreement allows the government to go beyond its current policy of "selective" and "punitive" attacks against certain members of the MILF. Those attacks may have demonstrated the President's counter-terrorism resolve in the councils of an approving White House, but—without the exit offered by resumed negotiations—they have been leading the country to a dead end.

Lastly, this consensus to return to the negotiating table reaffirms the country's traditional policy of using the offices of the Organization of Islamic Conference to facilitate peace talks. The proposal to ask the United States to come in as peace broker certainly cuts through the clutter of other policy suggestions; the willingness of the MILF to accept the new US role is a reflection of the stature their movement will attain if the United States sends someone like ex-senator George Mitchell as mediator. But the relative failure of the peace talks has not been caused by the current mediators—the OIC's Committee of Eight, spearheaded by Indonesia and Malaysia. Talks have failed because the two parties have not demonstrated the requisite commitment to peace.

The meeting of minds in Tokyo is proof that good neighbors make good mediators.



The flap on PBA players and drugs clarified

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

POOR NOLI Eala. He is being clobbered by basketball stars found in drug tests to be positive for prohibited drugs, by their fans, by basketball teams, by senators and, in the unkindest cut of all, by doctors, for doing what a Philippine Basketball Association commissioner is mandated to do. It is as if drug testing is the idea of Eala. What is not generally known is that the anti-drug campaign has been ongoing since the late '90s. It was suspended last year when Commissioner Jun Bernardino went on leave due to health problems. It was resumed when he reassumed his position last year. Eala merely inherited the job.

The Games and Amusements Board had imposed mandatory medical examinations before issuing licenses to PBA players. Drug testing was included. As a result, Asi Taulava and Dorian Peña were found positive for marijuana. They were suspended for two games, ordered to undergo mandatory drug testing every time they play, and told to undergo a rehabilitation program. Nobody complained then except the two players.

But now there is a difference and people are complaining. When the PBA forged an agreement with the Department of Health to implement an anti-drug campaign last March and random drug testing in the PBA started again, some of the biggest names in basketball tested positive for drugs: Alex Crisanto (Ginebra), Norman Gonzales (Talk and Text) and Jimwell Torion (Red Bull). Then, in a mandatory drug test for all PBA players, personnel, officials and coaches, five more players and three utility personnel tested positive: Jun Limpot (Ginebra), Noli Locsin and Angelo David (Talk and Text), Ryan Bernardo (FedEx) and Davonn Harp (Red Bull). As prescribed by the Revised PBA Guidelines, they were suspended indefinitely and ordered to enter a rehabilitation program, their cases to be reevaluated at the end of September. Another player, Dorian Peña, tested positive again in the random drug test, was suspended for one year, ordered to undergo rehabilitation and to be reevaluated after that.

Not such a bad ratio. Out of 161 players tested during the random drug testing, only three, or 1.7 percent, failed. And out of 287 players and personnel in the mandatory drug testing, only eight, or 2.7 percent, failed.

But suddenly, all hell broke loose. The players professed innocence, claiming that the traces of banned substances found in their urine were caused by the cough syrup and diet supplements they were taking. Sen. Robert Jaworski, a basketball star himself, said there were flaws in the drug-testing system and rapped Eala for suspending the players who tested positive. Senate and House committees conducted well-publicized hearings although the PBA is a private organization. Two doctors thought they knew better how to do the drug testing. And Eala and the PBA board of governors were criticized in the sports pages.

In an impromptu interview, Eala refuted the criticisms and complaints one by one:

- On cough syrup and other drugs: "Cough syrups, diet pills, food supplements and over-the-counter drugs cannot affect results. Some of these may contain substances like ephedrine which are structurally like the banned substance amphetamine and therefore may react positively to an **initial screen test** and therefore result in a **false positive**. But on **confirmatory testing** using a more sophisticated machine like GCMS, these substances will be separated and distinguished from ephedrine and, if not taken with illegal substances, will yield a negative result."
- On the alleged flaws in the drug-testing procedure: "The PBA stands firm on the soundness and thoroughness of the testing procedure. We use a two-bottle system, code the bottles for confidentiality, and employ a two-test procedure, namely (1) screen test and (2) confirmatory test. Procedure adheres to internationally accepted standards (SASHA) and is fully documented in a Chain of Custody Form (CCF).
- "Confirmatory testing of initially positive samples during screening is done by the PNP Crime Laboratory using the Gold Standard, GCMS which can trace specific substances from the urine specimen.
- "The PBA believed in the integrity of the system. PBA personnel and DOH technicians and doctors have no motive to tamper with the test procedure or results. Besides no one knows to whom the specimens belong since these are properly coded. Only our league physician, Dr. Ben Salud, knows the code and he has been with the PBA since 1975.

"Switching is virtually eliminated since the bottles are immediately sealed in front of the player, initialed and opened only in full view of the whole testing team. A second bottle containing the same urine specimen remains sealed and stored for possible use for retesting.

"Tampering or contamination cannot occur since the bottles that are used are brand new and sterile (contrary to the claims of some players). When positive specimens are transported to the PNP Crime Laboratory for confirmatory tests, bottles are placed in a ziplock, sealed in a plastic container and initialed. They remain coded.

"There is no evidence that the system is flawed, only allegations. There is, however, evidence that the system is accurate—the case of Jimwell Torion who admitted that he did use shabu.

"By questioning the system of testing, it does not only raise doubts on the truthfulness of the results of those who tested positive but also the 279 who tested negative, an unfair accusation. More importantly, this shatters the testing system of the PNP which undertakes more than 30,000 tests a month."

- On the contention that players do not know what medicines should **not** be taken: "We have been given a certification by the BFAD that there are no drugs being sold legally in the market that contain amphetamine or methylamphetamine. Diet supplements pass through the BFAD for approval."

I told you so

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THIS was what I wrote on May 21, shortly after Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo flew to the United States for a dinner with George W. Bush. The title of the column was "Scripts":

"I will make a fearless forecast.

"Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will run again next year. She will cite as her excuse for turning back on her word the fiction that things have changed radically since she said last December she would not seek a second term. Those things have to do with the rising scale of terrorism in the South.

"Additionally, she will cite as excuse the fact—it won't be entirely fiction—that George W. Bush wants her to remain as president of this country. She will say she has marching orders from Bush to rid this part of the world of terrorists, or more diplomatically that she has his blessings to resurrect this country's role as America's right arm in Asia.

"That is the script Malacañang has been writing the past couple of weeks....

"(T)he part about GMA having the White House's blessings to cling to power, is patent in the way the trip is being packaged. In the way it's being touted as the best thing that's happened to the country since Liberation. The best thing that's happened to "special relations" since Bataan and Corregidor.

"I'm betting GMA will soon announce an apparent bonanza beyond our wildest dreams to come our way from being the most willing among the coalition of the willing. A bonanza that, since it exists largely in promissory form, could be jeopardized by a change of president, particularly one who does not show the same scale of subservience—or diplomatically put, depth of resolve to see through Bush's anti-terror campaign.

"The conclusion to all this is that it is in the national interest that she runs again. She does not want to, particularly because she promised not to. But God and George W. Bush, who are now one and the same, want her to. The Stars and Stripes and the Red, White and Blue, who are now one and the same, are forcing her to."

Some people are now telling me it wasn't really very fearless because it was fairly obvious at that point. What can I say? Everything is obvious from hindsight. That column sparked a debate of sorts in media, and GMA herself was asked repeatedly by reporters if she would run. That got a rise out of her and she upbraided the reporters for being fixated on 2004. I half-suspect her pique came far less from the content of the question than from its timing. Her people hadn't quite prepared the psychological ground when the question was popped to her. Since then, however, the script has played out at a brisk pace, everyone, presumably including Mahathir, demanding that she run again to save this country from the mess she made of it. So now, she just smiles a Buddha smile when asked if she would go for it.

The part about Mahathir was curious, and I figure the scriptwriters got carried away there. Our banner story said it came from a couple of people in GMA's entourage in Tokyo who spoke on condition of anonymity. They had every reason to want to remain anonymous: it was a barefaced lie. Though I suspect the gamble was that Mahathir would be far too preoccupied with important things, like leading the Non-Aligned Movement, to stop to deny having endorsed the candidacy of another Southeast Asian president who has openly scorned nonalignment, not to speak of the Islamic umah.

GMA's headaches are not over, however, even with her apparent hurdle of her vow not to run again. The first of this has to do with her campaign line, which amounts pretty much to "*bata ng Kano*." Or as the activists are bound to put it, "*tuta ng Kano*." The only one who campaigned on an epic scale on this basis was Ramon Magsaysay. Edward Lansdale, the CIA operative who became the subject of Graham Greene's novel, "The Quiet American" (that has been turned into a movie, I understand), openly campaigned for him, using the full resources of the US Embassy here.

There is only one problem with that today, and it has little to do with whether the voters will continue to buy pro-Americanism on this scale or not. It has to do with the fact that Magsaysay was popular, GMA is not. Before the Americans threw their weight behind "the Guy," he was already widely adulated. The reason GMA vowed not to run again in the first place was because she is not. Bush's endorsement won't change it, particularly when all she has to show for her devotion to him is a stream of surplus arms inundating this country. A hungry people can't eat bullets. Except in the lurid imagination of action-movie scriptwriters: *Pakakainin kita ng bala*!

But that's nothing. The real problem is hurdling the effect of trampling down a monumental Filipino value, which is having a word of honor, or as the Tagalog puts it so much better, "*may isang salita*." Turning back on one's word is a cardinal sin, even if Cardinal Sin seems unable to appreciate the point. Elections may be generally, and cynically, regarded as home to empty promises, but voters expect to be regaled with scripts that enable them to suspend disbelief, like in the movies.

How can anyone who has breathtakingly trashed a solemn oath, one that caused the nation to undergo a brief ritual of catharsis, promise anything to voters? How can she tell the voters she will give food to the hungry, shelter to the homeless, and comfort to the bereaved? Without causing them to snicker and say, "Well, she can always say later the IMF or the WTO forced her to change her mind." Or more pointedly, "Well, she did say she would not run."

I'd like to see her scriptwriters get around that.

In the meanwhile, what can I say? I don't normally like to say I told you so, but I told you so.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@info.com.ph

A good fight looming?

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

TOMORROW is the 68th birthday of industrialist Eduardo Cojuangco, the founder of the Nationalist People's Coalition, the second largest political party, and reports say a big meeting of the NPC will take place in his Balete Drive residence, in anticipation of an "important decision" involving him in the near future. The NPC founder, however, won't be there as he is in San Francisco for a physical checkup; a number of close allies have flown there for a birthday get-together.

Speculation is thick that Cojuangco will run for president in 2004, with Fernando Poe Jr. being eyed as his running mate for the *masa* vote. There are indeed indications of preparations for a political campaign, with San Miguel Corp. very much in the thick of things, through schemes such as exclusive dealerships and the revival of Ramon Ang's earlier plans for convenience stores for SMC products at the municipal level. One of those being mobilized for the *masa* campaign is billiards champ Efren "Bata" Reyes, whose movie, "Pakners," with co-star FPJ, was funded by Cojuangco (it bombed out at the box office compared to Ai-Ai's movie). Also being tapped are SMC's basketball players and some of the super-topnotch PR outfits around, for his media blitz that began with his TV SMC ads. An insider observed that one thing that marks all the camp's movements seems to be the disregard for costs.

* * *

One indication that Cojuangco may be serious in his plans is that politicians close to him, such as Sen. John Osmeña, used to say months back that if President Macapagal-Arroyo runs, he will not run. Today they are no longer categorical, though some allies still insist he won't run, preferring to be kingmaker. Reports say that Cojuangco supporters are looking for a *casus belli* to steer away from the People Power Coalition and are eyeing a case before the Supreme Court that involves sequestered Cojuangco shares in a utility firm. His camp is reportedly asking a Supreme Court justice closely associated with GMA to inhibit himself in the case, and his refusal would be taken as the opportunity to break away from the PPC. A rather flimsy *casus belli*, considering the judiciary is supposed to be independent of the executive.

* * *

The entry of Cojuangco into the political arena has to be very calculated, for there are pros and cons to it. A segment of the business community believes he is god-sent to the economy on account of his business acumen in managing SMC and his other businesses through difficult economic times. They compare him to Thailand's Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, whom President Macapagal has recently invited to come here and lecture to the business community on "Shinawatra economics." But there is also a strong segment of the business community which has not forgotten his reputation for "Pacman-ism" and are afraid this would be replicated on a grander scale in a Cojuangco presidency. There's also civil society that has not forgiven him for his coconut levy manipulations; the Left that had suffered from his Marcosian tactics in the past; Cory Aquino who suspected his hand in Ninoy's assassination, and Imelda Marcos who hasn't made peace with him over alleged unrelinquished shares.

* * *

Assuming both GMA and Cojuangco would be persuaded to run in 2004, that would be a most interesting political combat. Speculation has also focused on whether politicians who have earlier signified intent to run, such as Sen. Panfilo Lacson and former Sen. Raul Roco, would continue their plans. Among the latest to throw their hat into the ring is Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., who recently celebrated his birthday at the Ramon Magsaysay Center on Roxas Boulevard with a big bash that looked every bit like a political launch for something for 2004; but he was quoted earlier as saying he won't run if GMA runs. There's iffy speculation that if Cojuangco runs, Lacson would be prevailed upon not to run, but that Roco would persist come what may.

* * *

Political pundits opine that in a multi-cornered fight the President would have the edge. A related question is whether she would succumb to local and foreign pressures and run. The consensus seems to be that she will. The opposition is getting mighty nervous about it, and an indication is the way they have chorused that she'd lose her credibility if she reneges on her Dec. 30 declaration that she won't run anymore. I discussed this credibility issue recently with Iloilo Rep. Raul Gonzalez, who has launched a signature campaign among the Lakas politicians to coax GMA to run. He has 85 signatures and is still counting, emphasizing that some of those who signed in his list had also earlier endorsed Cojuangco "because at that time they thought GMA was no longer running." He says the 85 lawmakers should be good for at least a million votes for GMA.

Gonzalez pooh-poohs the credibility issue, citing how Cory Aquino also said she wouldn't run against Marcos in 1985, only to be convinced by one million signatures raised by Chino Roces et al. He also recalled that Fidel Ramos should have abided by the result of the LDP convention that went for Ramon Mitra, but didn't and went on to become president. Did anyone question Aquino and Ramos for their actions? asked Gonzalez.

* * *

Would GMA be hurt by turning around? I share the view expressed recently by Today columnist Danilo Mariano, who opined that her declaration was "no sacred cow that could be violated only on pain of spiritual perdition and eternal damnation—hers as well as the nation's. She neither swore an oath nor invoked Holy Scripture when she...announced her non-candidacy." But her bigger problem is whether she would connect to the *masa* that dominates the votes.

Bad medicine

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Antonio J. Montalvan II

SOMETIMES we scoff at three-year-old data or two-year-old data as passé in our electronic world. Unfortunately for the proponents of House Bill 4110 or the Reproductive Health Care Act, even the most recent 2003 data on artificial birth control methods continue to uphold the finding of historical studies that it is a menace to over-all human health.

In a very recent (as of 2003) European study by the Polycarp Institute, 18 out of 21 retrospective studies show that women who take oral contraceptives prior to their first-term birth incur an increased risk in developing breast cancer. Cumulative results of comparative experiments done since 1972 up to the present noted that oral contraceptive pills (OCP) containing the artificial hormones mestranol and norethynodrel appeared to cause cases of metastatic breast cancer.

Both pro-life and pro-abortion groups openly admit that OCP use causes early abortions, with the latter doing so publicly in testimony before the United States Supreme Court in 1989.

Dr. Joel Brind of the City University of New York, in a recent 2003 workshop on breast cancer in the United States, testified that that "the weight of available evidence suggests a real, independent positive association between induced abortion and breast cancer risk." Brind bases his conclusions on the following: "The fact that of 38 epidemiological studies published through 2002, 29 have reported relative risks greater than 1.0, with 17 of these achieving at least borderline statistical significance (among studies on US women, 13 of 15 have reported a positive overall association, 8 of them achieving at least borderline statistical significance.)"

These studies continue to confirm the classic 1989 Anderson papers regarding the influence of OCP use on the rate of breast cell division. They found that "nulliparous women (i.e., women who have not had children) who took OCPs had a significantly higher rate of breast cell division than nulliparous women who did not take them. This was especially important because it is known that in general, cells that divide more rapidly are more vulnerable to carcinogens and thus, more likely to become cancerous."

The Pike study of 1981 found that "women who took OCPs for four years before their first full-term pregnancy (FFTP) had at least a 2.25-fold (125 percent) increased risk of developing breast cancer before the age of 32." This startled the research world and led to additional studies, including a very large American trial called the CASH study (Cancer And Steroid Hormone study). In 1993, the CASH study showed that "women who took OCPs prior to their FFTP and were under 44 years of age had a 40 percent increased risk of breast cancer, which reached statistical significance in the 35 to 44-year-old age group."

Later in England, Chilvers et al. published the results of another large study called the United Kingdom National Study that showed "young women under the age of 36 who had used OCP for at least 4 years before their FFTP had at least a 44 percent increased risk in breast cancer." A large study performed in 1995 by Brinton et al. showed a "42 percent increased risk for women who used OCPs for more than 6 months prior to their FFTP."

The largest study to date, was in fact performed by the World Health Organization. It examined over 2,300 women and found that "use of OCPs before the age of 25 increased the risk of invasive cervical cancer by 45 percent." In addition, more women get breast cancer in the United States than all of the other alluded to cancers combined, making this the most dangerous risk in Western countries. The WHO study concluded that "oral contraceptives may be particularly risky in Asian and African countries where cervical and liver cancer are prevalent."

A 1995 study by Skegg pooled the data from the WHO and a New Zealand study, the two largest studies that looked at women who took Depo-Provera for long periods of time. He found that women who had taken DMPA for between two and three years before the age of 25 had a "310 percent statistically significant risk of getting breast cancer whereas women who had taken DMPA for more than 3 years prior to the age of 25 had at least a 190 percent increased risk, that was also significant."

Clearly, there is a moral issue with regard to HB 4110 surrounding the medical aspects of contraception. It is a bill that hides from every user the right to be informed of any adverse effect that it may have. The writers and advocates of this bill carry the responsibility for the unnecessary harm inflicted on users who will avail themselves of artificial contraceptive use once the bill is passed.

It is not true that the bill is anti-abortion. In fact, a recent amended copy of its explanatory note states that the bill "seeks to remove existing legal barriers to reproductive health care laws that prohibit abortion." There is no such need to "read between the lines."

My "downstairs neighbor," Dean Jorge Bocobo, wrote me to say that like me, he was disgusted "at the worldwide industry of baby killing in the name of fewer people." "Indeed, my position is jobs and food security, not abortion and birth control... poverty is the true cause of overpopulation."

American involvement in this bill is not just a bogey. There is some "contraceptive imperialism" going on even at this moment in time. Verified reports from the House have it that US-based contraceptive drug companies are moving in with lobby money.

It is not just bad medicine. It is bad politics. It is not empowerment.

* * *

Comments to monta@sni.ph

In God we trust—Sin and sin did Erap in

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

MONEY is a very strange place for allegedly atheistic America to proclaim a supernatural thing called God. Yet "IN GOD WE TRUST" can be found on every piece of US legal tender from the penny to the $10,000 bill.

Is that the society that invented the democratic principle of the Separation of Church and State? Why does a nation that embosses God on the very roots of all evil, ban public prayer in public schools as a tyranny of the majority upon atheists, Wiccans, Satanists and others not of the Judeo-Christian tradition? How could such a morally paradoxical society be the freest place for religion and conscience in the world—and its most prosperous and powerful country? Why are they not more like our moral republic, which holds daily Catholic Mass at every national government office, Malacañang, the Supreme Court and the Department of Education included—as if Muslims and lumads were just worthless heathens and third-class citizens? (Then we insist on peace in Mindanao.)

Somewhere in Ben Franklin's diaries, I think, I once read the startling claim that in fact, "In God We Trust" is America's way of putting its money where its mouth is on religion. Its homespun wisdom means this: "Only" in God do we put our trust—not in any organized religion claiming to represent God on earth—even if a billion people believe it. "In God we trust" is sardonic Yankee brevity that reveals the wit and genius hiding in so bug-ugly a phrase as "separation of church and state"—which thankfully is not used in the Constitution.

The Philippine Constitution imported the American anti-establishment principle in Sec.(5) of the Bill of Rights: "No law shall be made respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

But it is a congenital defect of our democracy that we never disestablished the 400-year-old state religion, the Catholic Taliban regime that ruled for centuries, despite having an excommunicated Mason as national hero in Jose Rizal. New proof exists.

Associate Justice Artemio Panganiban, writing in the book "Reforming the Judiciary," may incite Rizalian rages in Filipinos by telling the events of Jan. 20, 2001, involving Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide Jr. and Catholic prelate Jaime Cardinal Sin when Gloria took an oath. Panganiban recounts how Cardinal Sin pounded his fist on the table, at a perhaps wavering Vice President, and forces the issue: "Gloria, you owe the presidency to the people. It is the people who want a new President." That was before the Jan. 20 oath-taking at the Edsa Shrine. Justice Panganiban describes what happened before dawn:

"I am still wondering up to now how I had summoned the courage to propose the oath-taking of Mrs. Arroyo even when she had not yet requested it, and even when President Estrada was still in Malacañang; and why Chief Justice Davide immediately agreed to it, even prior to consultation with other justices...the Chief Justice and I have the same habit of reading the Scriptures as the source of God's daily instructions on how we should do our work. I take my bearings from daily mass readings. But in the case of the Chief Justice, he cuts the Bible and reflects on the page that opens. On that fateful morning of Jan. 20, he woke up as usual at 3:30 a.m., prayed, cut his Bible and reflected on Isaiah 62, which spoke of the Restoration of Zion. As he prayed and meditated, he was struck by the unmistakable impression that he should act to restore Zion, that is, to bring normalcy to the country. Hence when I called him up at 5:30 a.m. he was spiritually and psychologically ready for my then weird-sounding proposal."

Religious freedom is not necessarily violated—it is possibly aided—by a justice reading the Bible at cruxes of history. But, then Panganiban continues, "at 6:20 a.m., Radio Veritas announced that Cardinal Sin was giving Estrada until noon to resign, otherwise the Vice President would take her oath as President." Apparently GMA jumped at Sin's pounding because at 10 a.m. she calls the Supreme Court and invites the justices to her oath-taking at noon. They ask for a letter requesting Davide to swear her in. . It arrives by fax at 11:26 a.m.

By noon of Jan. 20, less than four days since the Senate slew itself with 11 daggers, a second wrong may have been done on the Constitution under the orchestration of Cardinal Sin and Hilario Davide. Given Panganiban's reputation for veracity, it would seem at the very least that Caesar's wife was in the tent with more than the camel's nose.

Jaime Cardinal Sin has a dangerous *doppelganger* in Jaime Citizen Sin. Together they do a quick-change act from habit to barong, zucchetto to *salakot*, that inspires every wanna-be Rasputin in a cassock. (I cry mutation.)

* * *

Jose Rizal's birthday is around the corner. Join a celebration of the First Filipino's exquisite body of words and ideas—by imitation—at "www.joserizal.blogspot.com" where it's "Epistles At dawn-Dapitan letters between Jose Rizal and Pablo Pastells." Rizal scintillates in the epistolary: "These are the fundamental principles of my religious ideas...There are no anathemas and prohibitions, but a free forum for discussion; no miracles as proofs, but facts and experience give their verdict. There is no fear of apocryphal accounts or forged manuscripts: death is the fate of everything that does not conform to nature...I believe in the redemption of the Word which has been decreed from all eternity."

Hear, hear! In God we trust!

* * *

Comments at www.deanjorgebocobo.blogspot.com

Middle-aged thoughts

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

THERE seems to be some truth in the statement that "writing is in the blood." You either have the talent or you don't. A true writer will always look for ways to express his thoughts.

These things crossed my mind when I read the letter of Dr. Lut Dimaculangan of San Pablo City, a two-time contributor to the INQUIRER's Youngblood section, who feels sad that she is no longer qualified to submit articles to that section.

She wrote: "I can't wait to be 60 to be able to write again and share my work with the readers of PDI, this time for the Highblood column. But that would take me another 30 years. We, the 30 something and above, have also stories to share. The more we are in touch with life and all its splendors and downfalls.

"I hope PDI gives us a chance and space, much like Youngblood and Highblood. After all, we belong to the bloodline of PDI. I took the liberty of thinking of a title that could aptly describe the 30 something and above—Lifeblood—since it is at this point in our lives when we suck out the marrow of life. Unless, others think otherwise."

Well, the reader is not alone in her complaint. Many similarly situated writers have expressed dismay over the newspaper's practice of reserving a column for the youth (or anybody who's not above 29 years) and for the senior citizens (60 years and above).

Here are some facts and figures about the two columns.

Youngblood is aimed at encouraging the youth to share their thoughts or ideas about the things that interest or concern them. A sounding board of sorts for what goes on in the minds of the people who comprise almost 45 percent of our population. Now you know why politicians try hard to project themselves as representatives of the youth.

Rationale

According to the Opinion editor, the quality of many of the articles submitted by these budding writers is impressive. With a little polishing, they can give some of the professional writers today a run for their money. Sometimes, they're even better.

In Highblood's case, the intention is for the readers to profit from the wisdom and experience of the chronologically advanced (that's the politically correct term for senior citizens) members of our society. With their education, training and actual involvement in life's multifarious problems, they make good guidance counselors-cum-psychologists.

Every week, the INQUIRER receives an average of 30 articles for Youngblood (majority are sent by e-mail), while Highblood's is about one-fourth of that number. The difference in numbers may be explained by the fact that the young writers are more energetic and proficient in the use of computers. The more mature writers are (probably) busy taking care of their grandchildren or looking for ways to increase the yield of their retirement pay.

With the abundance in articles, Youngblood is able to come out three times a week, while Highblood sees print only when interesting articles become available. But in terms of payment, they're equal: P1,000 per article. In most cases, though, the thrill of seeing the product of their genius published is reward enough; the money is just additional gravy or icing on the cake.

Well represented

Once, a Youngblood writer called me to ask where she could get copies of a two-week old issue of the INQUIRER where her article appeared. Apparently, she was out of the country when her magnum opus came out and was told about it by a classmate when they saw each other in class.

She was not content with just downloading a copy of her article from the newspaper's website. She wanted an original hard copy to show to her parents. The problem was that the INQUIRER's old copies are for reference use only at the library. No extra copies of the issue she wanted were available.

As luck would have it, after a week, I found a slightly ruffled copy of the issue she was looking for in one of the newspaper's conference rooms. She was in my office within 30 minutes from the time I left word at the number she gave me about my unexpected find. I never saw a happier teenager in my life.

Going back to the reader's request for a column for the 30 something but below 60 years. The Opinion editor explained that the people within that age bracket are sufficiently represented by the columnists who write for different sections of the newspaper. They can very well articulate the fears, frustrations and dreams of the generations that come between Youngblood and Highblood.

The editor expressed concern that there may not be enough articles to sustain a regular column for middle-age writers because most of them would be very busy earning a living for their growing children or preparing for their eventual retirement.

He gave the assurance though that articles from writers in the mid-life age bracket are most welcome. Those that are well-written and timely can be published as "Commentary" or "Analysis."

One final note. I am not giving up the hope that the editor may change his mind about giving that generation a niche of its own in the editorial section. If that happens, I will suggest that the column be named "Intra-venous blood" to indicate that it is the age that bridges the two boundaries of normal life.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

THEY SAID

Wrong issue

"The king says I am the cause of the world's problems because of my outfit. Never mind terrorism, government corruption, poverty and disease; it's me and my pants. I reject that."

—Thob'sile Dlamini, criticizing the king of Swaziland's chauvinistic as well as anti-human rights stance

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How wrong can Erap persist on being?

IN YET another desperate attempt to climb out of the big hole he has put himself in, Joseph "Erap" Estrada is at it again. This time, he and his gang have decided to file impeachment raps against eight Supreme Court justices. You have to hand it to the guy for his tenacity. He's literally hanging on for dear life since, if convicted, he does face the death penalty. But tenacity aside, this recent move indicates someone who is losing his grip (on reality, time, or logic).

As an example, let me quote him on his latest brain thrust: "It is now up to you, the Filipino people, to be the judge and give me justice. True justice is all in your hands because power resides in you." Lest Estrada forget, the Filipino people are very much aware of the true power that does reside in them. As such, they have already judged him and they have already dispensed justice to him. That is why there was an Edsa Dos and that is very much why he is now in jail.

However, Estrada obviously seems to be having a hard time grappling with this truth as he goes on to say: "When I was forcibly and illegally removed as your President, I was not the only victim. They also stole it from you, the Filipino people who put me in office in a clean election."

First of all, Estrada cannot claim to be a victim as he was clearly lording it over all during his short albeit disastrous term as President. The only ones who can claim to be victims are the Filipino people whom he had clearly victimized during his term. Secondly, nobody, not Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and definitely not the Supreme Court justices, stole anything from the people. If anyone was doing the stealing from the Filipino public it was no one else but he.

Although some measure of force was needed to remove him from office, with the way he so stubbornly clung to power like a desperate lizard, "*kapit tuko*" as we say it. Let me just point out that he was not at all removed from it illegally. He said so himself, true power resides in the people. Realizing their grievous mistake for putting him in office, the Filipino people, in attempting to rectify their error, rightly exercised their power by ousting him through People Power 2.

His most recent move to impeach members of the Supreme Court is just an act of a frantic man needing to snatch whatever time he can buy.

The best that the Filipino people can do is to actively anticipate Estrada's loud thud, and bury this whole issue along with him.

—**LENNA DE DIOS,**
Navotas, Metro Manila

Unbelievable excuse for sending 'wrong' letter

IT'S a trite, unbelievable excuse that Arkhon Antolin, manager of the Public Information Department of the MWSS Regulatory Office, trotted out in his letter last May 29, 2003 in response to Maynilad Water Services Inc.'s complaint about the biased conclusions of his boss, Eduardo Santos.

How could Santos' letter be merely a "draft" and "unofficial" when it was sent to the INQUIRER to officially rebut what Antolin called a "negative report" about privatization, on the letterhead of an office belonging to the MWSS and signed, I presume, by Santos' himself? Under these circumstances, how could they have "inadvertently sent the wrong letter"? At the very least, the Santos letter expressed his personal views which support our contention that the chief regulator is prejudiced against Maynilad.

On the other hand, if Antolin is to be believed, then Santos is merely a figurehead, signing letters willy-nilly without understanding its contents and worse, unable to appreciate the consequences of his action. Either way, Antolin's letter isn't helping his boss any.

The more that Antolin and Santos try to extricate themselves from this *faux pas* that they themselves created in the first place, the more it is becoming obvious that the office of the MWSS chief regulator is in shambles.

If the MWSS PID sent a wrong letter, and the chief regulator signed a letter that he did not understand, what else could be wrong at the office of the chief regulator?

—**JESUS MATUBIS JR.**
manager, Corporate Affairs
and Media Relations,
Maynilad Water Services Inc.,
MWSS Compound, Katipunan
Road, Balara, Quezon City

Viewed from the Superferry

I WAS inside Cabin 207 at the third level of Superferry 12 when the M/V San Nicolas rammed into it last May 25. There was a very loud boom at the port side of the Superferry. My watch told me that it was 11:19 a.m. I thought it was a terrorist-caused explosion, especially because I saw some suspicious-looking men on board.

Some five minutes before the collision, the Superferry tilted dangerously. Then the loud boom came, and all hell broke loose. A woman at the third level station announced through the public address system that a man had jumped overboard. I quickly went to where I thought the explosion came from, wondering how a man could cause such a loud explosion by jumping overboard.

Outside our cabin, I saw several crew members wearing life jackets and running here and there. Some of them were shouting at the passengers not to panic—but they were the ones who were panicking instead. A crew member told me that a smaller boat collided with our big boat at the steel ladder on the port side.

About 40 or more life rafts and hundreds of life jackets were thrown from the Superferry to the passengers of M/V San Nicolas who were swimming and treading water below us. But the life jackets and the life rafts were only carried away by the wind and the waves. Some of the passengers swam toward them, but they were no match for the wind and the waves which rapidly carried away the life rafts and life jackets.

None of the crew members of the Superferry actually dived into the sea to save the passengers. I am certain there would have been less casualties had there been scuba divers on board the Superferry when the tragedy happened. The presence of trained scuba divers should be compulsory on any ship. Every ship should have these scuba divers to rescue passengers at sea with the proper distribution of life jackets and life rafts.

It's not true that there was zero visibility. Yes, it was raining, but we could see the unfortunate passengers in the sea. If there was zero visibility, why didn't they use fog lights for the smaller boat to see and avoid our ship? They were equipped with a global positioning system and radar. So why didn't they have time to maneuver away?

I could see that some of the victims could have been saved had first aid been available in time. There should have been helicopters with nets to hoist the victims and bring them to shore. There was one helicopter which came through, but it only took pictures and then flew away.

The Coast Guard rescue team and their vessels, passing commercial boats and a fishing vessel were helpful enough. But they came several minutes or an hour after the incident.

—**AURELIO D. MENZON,**
G/F Bayantel Building,
Tacloban City

Basilan governor denies report

BASILAN Gov. Wahab Akbar vehemently denied an INQUIRER news report last June 3, 2003, insinuating that he was in cahoots with the Abu Sayyaf during a hostage crisis involving foreign nationals in a community hospital in Lamitan, Basilan. Akbar also said he should not be made a part of whatever mistakes the military committed during the hospital hostage crisis that allowed the Abu Sayyaf bandits to escape along with their hostages.

Akbar said that he denied these allegations in previous reports and continues to deny his alleged links with the bandit group. "I have even coordinated with military authorities in pursuing this bandit group and they are now neutralized in Basilan. The military and the people of Basilan can attest to this," Akbar said as he demanded that the identity of alleged witnesses who linked him to the Abu Sayyaf bandits be revealed.

"These allegations are a form of character assassination and might be the handiwork of political groups in my province interested in the elections next year," Akbar said without elaborating.

—**CRIS PUNO**
public information officer,
Province of Basilan

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The attraction of an unspoiled Butuan

THE CULTURAL presentations at the History Town in Intramuros are always spectacular shows worth spending time to watch. The striking native attire of the ethnic groups and their peculiar indigenous way of dancing are quite revealing.

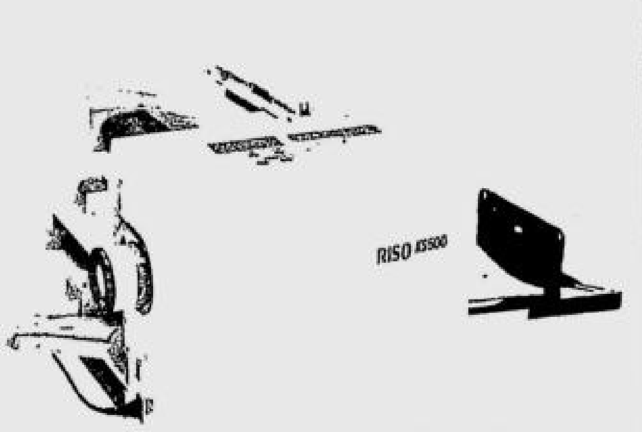
One travel flyer states that: "In the beginning there was no Philippines but there was Butuan." Some claim, indeed! And rightly so. The Philippines is of 16th century Spanish vintage. Butuan's history, culture, arts and people date back to the 4th century. The city is an exciting source of archaeological artifacts in Mindanao.

Chinese Soong Shi history includes the fact that as early as the 10th century people from Butuan had trading relations with the Kingdom of Champa (South Vietnam). By the 11th century Butuan was a busy trading port as evidenced by the discovery of nine *balangays* (Butuan boats) and other archaeological findings in the vicinity of Butuan City.

Butuan cuisine of shellfish, crabs, lobsters cooked with stuffed young coconut (Buntan) or with milk is a gourmet's delight. To the uninitiated, the native *onas* (*palagsing, tampi, kinabo*) *kayam pao* and *palatic, kusilva* and *kalamay* are distinctly Butuan delights.

There are several versions as to the origin of the word Butuan. Some believe that it originated from a sour fruit *butuan*. Others say that Butuan comes from a certain "Datu Buntuan," a chieftain who once ruled the place. Some writers would say that Butuan comes from "But-an" which literally means a good person, a person with a sound and discerning disposition. Whatever is the right version, Butuan City is proud of its more than one thousand and a half centuries of exciting saga. Butuan is a place that deserves to be remembered. Butuan City is a city of good people, unspoiled by civilization, unspoiled by modernity.

—**SAMUEL P. FERNANDEZ,**
PUP, Sta. Mesa Manila



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Putting things in the proper perspective

WE greatly appreciate the INQUIRER's editorial last May 29, 2003, titled, "Name-calling."

The Philippine judiciary, especially the Supreme Court, has been under attack in recent months following decisions in major cases and developments in the political arena. While the Court generally welcomes criticisms as opportunities for improving the service it renders to the public, it is nevertheless powerless to defend itself against such attacks, be they justified or unjustified. As Justice Artemio V. Panganiban explained in his book, "Transparency: Unanimity and Diversity," in the face of attacks from media and public opinion, "Generally, judges cannot answer back... The judiciary and its members cannot be likened to politicians who cater to controversy and love to see themselves in the limelight for whatever reason, whether for right or for wrong, provided their names are spelled correctly."

Thus, whenever any member of the public takes up the cudgels for the judiciary—less to defend the institution and more to put things in their proper perspective—the judiciary can only welcome such actions.

—**CONRAD S. TOLENTINO,**
Director IV,
Office of the Chief Justice,
Public Information Office,
Supreme Court, Manila

From a 'Spectator' reader

FOR many years, I have been following the "Spectator" column in the Sports section. Al S. Mendoza never ceases to impress me with his superbly written pieces. His column last May 30, 2003 titled "A ticket for Ate Glo, please," was another masterpiece! His topic struck a familiar chord in me especially the historic Crispa-Toyota rivalry of my days. I am a big fan of Mendoza and I would surely have enjoyed watching the game live at the Big Dome with him. However, I'm miles away and a few bucks short of the budget so I settled for the boob tube instead.

Moreover, Mendoza is no doubt a Crispa Redmanizer follower and I am a Toyota fanatic. But, what the heck, we share a love for that same ice cold San Miguel beer. Cheers!

—**FRANKLIN Q. CARMELO,**
Plaza Diana, Sto. Domingo,
Urdaneta City

Can MMDA continue its demolition rampage?

WE at the Urban Poor Associates are stunned at the Metro Manila Development Authority's blatant disregard for the law. We do not understand the power of Bayani Fernando that he can dismantle houses of the urban poor along riverbanks, under bridges, sidewalks and burn "*karitons*" of the vendors anytime he wants despite existing laws.

Elizabeth Tepace, a mother who had just given birth, was left drenched in the rain; a mother of two, Shirley Gaspe was shocked at the speed of the demolition crew which pulled apart their house. The people were told to move up to the street for the floodgates of La Mesa Dam were being opened. When they did, the MMDA team below started demolishing their homes. I saw Shirley sitting on a worn-out sofa in the Caltex station where the people took refuge as the MMDA went amuck tearing down their houses. People had lived there at least 16 years.

The Quezon Avenue demolition victims had no relocation. Romeo Romero of the MMDA told me that, "We did not serve them notices because they are illegal structures." Even if illegal the people have a right in law to be relocated (RA 7273) just as they have rights to life, etc

Romero told me that the families were offered temporary hous [illegible] pound in Mandaluyong but according to the Department of Social Welfare and Development's social services department personnel, they only accept abused children. The families were not allowed to bring any personal belongings with them. I think they would be passed on to the DSWD compound as "victims of calamities" and not as families whose houses had been demolished.

Does our President know about this? Has she put Fernando in power to violate her Executive Order 152 on the observance of humane demolitions?

I saw as I was going home from work a man dressed in blue sprawled on Litex Road. He was stabbed by an irate vendor because the MMDA burned his "*kariton*." People cheered. Is this the kind of scenario we want to see if the MMDA continues its heartless way with poor people?

Fernando may know the law, but he thinks he can go around it. Why is the President keeping mum about it? A Senate hearing on the urban poor may help. Such a hearing was mentioned recently in the papers.

—**ROSELLE L. PACIFICO,**
Urban Poor Associates,
upa@mydestiny.net

Junta lashes out at opposition as UN seeks Suu Kyi release

RANGOON—Burma's military rulers lashed out against pro-democracy forces as a special UN envoy on Sunday failed for a third day to secure the release of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

UN envoy Razali Ismail, on the third day of a five-day mission, has received no public indication that he would be able to even meet with Suu Kyi, who is being detained at a secret location following a bloody clash May 30 in northern Burma.

Instead, the country's intelligence chief and third-ranked leader Gen. Khin Nyunt condemned "internal destructive elements"—a reference to Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy (NLD), saying they were undermining Burma's peace and stability.

"Untoward events occurred on May 30 since some people were misled into following the misinterpretation of democracy," Khin Nyunt said in a speech Saturday to school teachers in the central Burmese town of Maymyo. The speech was carried in state-run newspapers on Sunday.

Razali is expected to meet again Monday with one of the junta leaders, possibly Gen. Maung Aye, a hardliner who ranks no. 2 in the hierarchy.

"He told us that he will get a clear answer Monday after meeting one of the top leaders," said Hkun Tun Oo, an ethnic minority politician, referring to Razali's request to meet with Suu Kyi.

Razali, who declined to talk with reporters, held talks with 15 ethnic leaders from nine political parties Sunday including Oo, chair of the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy.

Burma has not allowed access to Suu Kyi since the clash involving pro-junta supporters and her followers in which at least four people died, saying only she is unhurt and in custody at "a safe place." Offices of her NLD party have been shut and other opposition members detained.

Exiled opposition figures in Thailand say Suu Kyi may have received head injuries in the violence, which they say left up to 70 people dead.

Suu Kyi's detention has drawn sharp criticism from around the world and threats of more economic sanctions from the United States.

But its rulers have remained defiant.

"With or without foreign assistance, the Union of (Burma) will continue to strive for the emergence of a peaceful, developed and democratic nation," he said in his Saturday speech.

Earlier, Nyunt, who met with Razali Saturday accused the NLD of corruption and triggering the May 30 violence by seeking a confrontation with the government.

Nyunt is generally regarded as more liberal than Aye or Senior Gen. Than Shwe, who heads the ruling State Peace and Development Council. Shwe, who is out of Rangoon at a beachside resort, is not expected to meet Razali.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has said he is "gravely concerned" about the detention of Suu Kyi and other NLD leaders. *AP*

4 Israelis killed in Palestinian attack

GAZA CITY—Three Palestinians disguised as Israeli soldiers sneaked into an Army post Sunday and killed four Israelis before being killed by troops—the first major attack on Israelis since last week's Mideast summit.

The shooting could be a major setback to a US-backed peace plan and came just hours after Palestinian militant groups affirmed they would not halt attacks on Israelis.

Three armed groups—Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade—claimed joint responsibility for the shooting. A leaflet gave the names of the gunmen, all in their early 20s, one from each group.

"This joint operation was committed to confirm our people's united choice of holy war and resistance until the end of occupation over our land and holy places," the leaflet said.

The Al Aqsa militia is linked to the ruling Fatah movement, and its involvement in the shooting was a direct challenge to Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas, a senior Fatah member, who has been trying to persuade militants to halt attacks on Israelis.

The Israeli military declined comment on the Israeli dead and wounded. However, medics and an Israeli settler spokesperson said four Israelis were killed and four were wounded in the shooting.

Sharon adviser Dore Gold said Abbas had committed himself to an immediate halt to attacks on Israelis as called for in the road map, yet the attacks have not stopped.

"This must come to an end," he said.

Israeli officials called on Abbas to take immediate steps to end the attacks, but Abbas said he would resist pressure to crack down on the militants.

"We will not allow anybody to drag us into a civil war," Abbas said Sunday.

Israel had provoked the attacks by continuing restrictions on Palestinians and killing two Hamas militants Thursday night near the West Bank city of Tulkarem, Palestinian Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath said.

"This requires an immediate discussion with the Palestinian factions to bring an end to the fighting and there is an effort from all sides to make sure that this happens," Shaath said.

The gunmen, who wore Israeli Army uniforms, attacked the Army post near the Erez crossing into Israel just after dawn. The post is near an Israeli-run industrial zone at the northern end of the Gaza Strip. *AP*

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WORLDBRIEFS

Gov't troops defend Liberian capital

MONROVIA, Liberia—Liberia's President Charles Taylor vowed Saturday to hold his besieged capital against rebels pressing hard from the outskirts, and rattling machine-gun fire and heavy explosions on the outskirts sent desperate tens of thousands seeking refuge at the US Embassy. "This city is not for the taking," a defiant Taylor said as he calmly directed Monrovia's defense. Artillery and machine-gun fire erupted in western suburbs at dawn, prompting the biggest refugee exodus in years in the capital of the war-plagued west African nation. Fearing fighting would move into the city center, countless residents of the city of one million thronged the closed gates of the American Embassy. *AP*

UN experts inspect Iraq nuke plant

BAGHDAD—UN experts were to continue their first post-war inspection of Iraq's largest nuclear plant Sunday after expressing fears that thousands were poisoned when the site was looted in the wake of the war. In sporadic unrest that has gripped parts of Iraq since Saddam Hussein's fall, a US soldier was killed and four others were wounded Saturday in an attack near Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit, north of Baghdad, the US military's Central Command (Centcom) said. The troops came under fire with rocket-propelled grenades and small arms. A US patrol also came under fire late Saturday on the northern edge of the tense city of Fallujah and returned fire killing one person, Centcom said, while a second attacker fled the scene. *AFP*

Mauritania coup put down

NOUAKCHOTT—An attempted coup by elements of the Mauritanian Army was put down early Sunday in the west African country, a source close to the government said. Mauritanian President Maaouiya Ould Taya and his family were safe and in good health, the source said. Some sporadic shooting was still to be heard in the south of the capital Nouakchott at around 5:30 a.m. near a tank regiment base, according to local residents contacted by telephone, implying that soldiers loyal to the government were still meeting pockets of resistance. *AFP*

Foreigners may be banned in Aceh

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia—Indonesian authorities may ban foreigners from entering troubled Aceh province after a German tourist was shot dead in an area where government troops were battling separatist rebels, an Army spokesperson said Sunday. Lt. Col. Firdaus Komarno said the government was mulling the ban because of German tourist Lothar Heinrich Albert Engels's death and the discovery of two Malaysian journalists in Aceh, who were reporting there illegally on tourist visas. Since Indonesia launched its latest offensive against the rebels on May 19, the government has kept a tight rein on foreign journalists in Aceh, but has not closed the province off. *AP*

$2M sought for UN observers

TBILISI—The kidnappers who seized three UN observers, a Dane and two Germans in the troubled Caucasus republic of Georgia, have demanded $2 million for their release, the private Rustavi-2 channel reported Sunday. The television station, which did not cite any sources, said that the abductors had got the UN staff, who were seized Thursday along with their interpreter, to contact their headquarters and to relay the ransom demand. Neither the United Nations observer mission, which oversees an uneasy ceasefire between Georgian government forces and separatists from the Abkhazia region, nor the authorities in Tbilisi, would comment on the report. *AFP*

7,000 in Barcelona for nude installation

BARCELONA, Spain—More than 7,000 people gathered at daybreak Sunday and shed their clothes in the morning chill to take part in artist Spencer Tunick's largest work yet—an installation featuring a sea of nude bodies covering a central Barcelona avenue. The New York native has achieved worldwide renown for his work, which often features large numbers of nude people posing in urban settings. *AP*

Pope to young Croats: Walk path leading to authentic joy

RIJEKA, Croatia—Looking fatigued in sweltering heat, Pope John Paul II held up families as the bedrock of society Sunday as he celebrated Mass in this tranquil Adriatic seaport.

The 83-year-old Pope, outside the Vatican on a Pentecost Sunday for the first time as he continued his 100th foreign pilgrimage, encouraged young Croats to marry, raise families and help their children overcome temptations to walk "the path that leads to authentic joy."

"You are an important part of society and the church," John Paul told families among at least 100,000 pilgrims gathered at a river delta, some of whom spent the night lighting candles and praying.

The Pope said he empathized with the struggle of families in this ex-Yugoslav republic to make ends meet, and he urged the country's politicians not to ignore their plight. Joblessness in Croatia is about 20 percent, and the average monthly wage is just 3,500 kuna ($450).

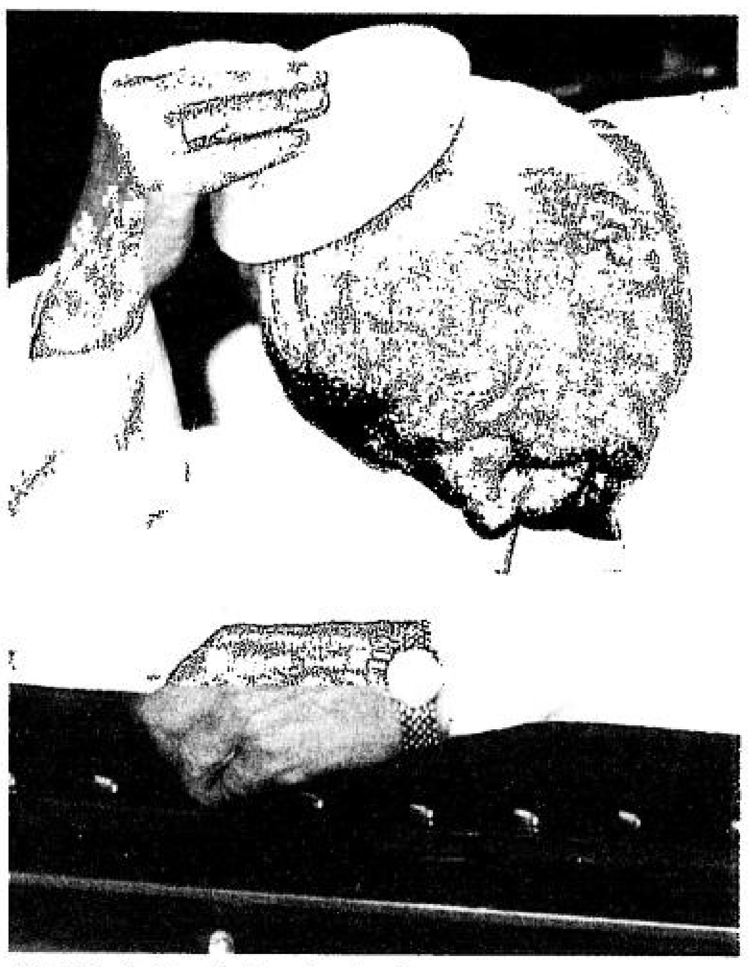
"It must not be forgotten that in helping the family, we also help to resolve other important problems, such as providing assistance to the sick and the elderly, stopping the spread of crime and finding a remedy to drug use," John Paul said.

As in much of Europe, many young couples in this overwhelmingly Roman Catholic nation tend to live together out of wedlock. The Pope singled them out in his homily, saying they should not be afraid of "a bond which is publicly manifested and recognized."

Although his voice was clear and strong, the frail pontiff looked tired and drawn, shielded by a canopy from temperatures that were 28 degrees Celsius and climbing by midmorning.

But John Paul—nearing the end of a draining, five-day, five-city trip in often sweltering heat that was blamed for the deaths of two pilgrims Saturday in eastern Croatia—has showed a stamina that has surprised even his Vatican entourage.

"He is amazing," said papal spokesperson Joaquin Navarro-Valls. "What you can see everywhere is the inner strength of this man who keeps going without even asking: 'Am I tired? Is this too much?' He just keeps the pace—the pace he has imposed on himself." *AP*



JOHN Paul in Croatia: Amazing stamina. AP

Gay man elected Episcopal bishop in New Hampshire

CONCORD, New Hampshire—New Hampshire Episcopalians elected an openly gay man as their next bishop, a historic vote in a church deeply divided on the issue of homosexuality.

The selection of the Rev. V. Gene Robinson, 56, who was chosen over three other candidates in voting by New Hampshire clergy and lay Episcopalians on Saturday, is still subject to confirmation next month by the church's national General Convention.

The confirmation is likely to be a heated battle with international implications. Robinson drew opposition from many in the Anglican community worldwide.

The Anglican Communion represents 77 million people worldwide, including 2.3 million members of the Episcopal Church in the United States. In 1998, the Anglican Communion approved a resolution calling gay sex "incompatible with Scripture."

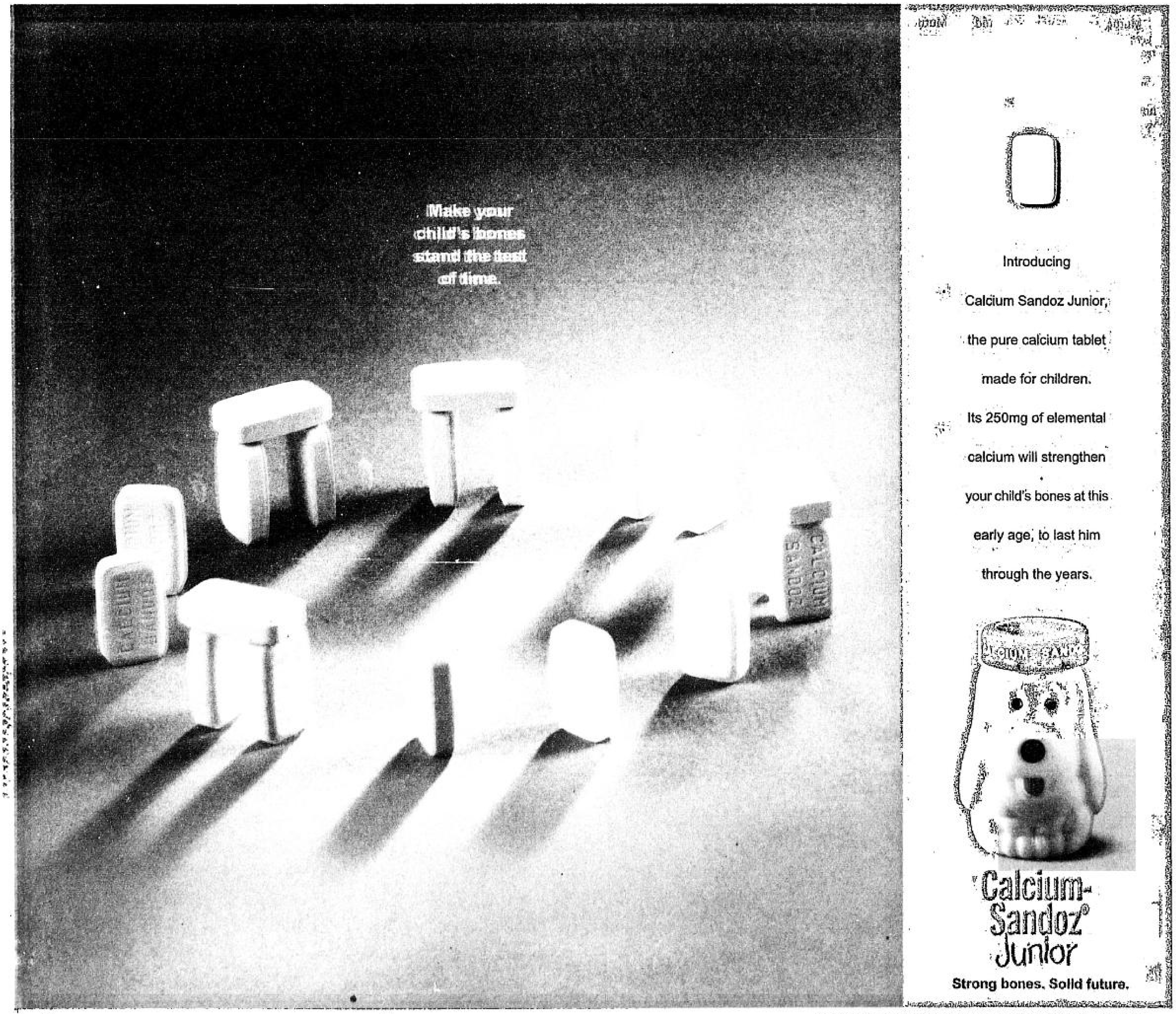
After the election, Robinson told his supporters to be gentle with those who disagreed with their decision.

"We will show the world how to be a Christian community," he said. "I plan to be a good bishop, not a gay bishop."

According to the Episcopal News Service, the only other bishop to publicly state that he is actively gay is Otis Charles, former bishop of Utah, who made the announcement in 1993 after retiring.

Robinson, who was married and has two grown children, now lives with his partner, Mark Andrew, in Weare and is an assistant to retiring Bishop Douglas Theuner. Friends say he remains on good terms with his ex-wife and two daughters, both of whom were at Saturday's election.

He preaches at area churches and has been active in local causes, such as establishing "Concord Outright," a support group for teenagers. *AP*



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Pothole repair work rushed on expressway

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Potholes, as deep as six to eight inches, are aggravating the heavy traffic along the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX), officials of the Philippine National Construction Corp. said.

Travel is delayed as vehicles plying the 82-km highway avoid the potholes or accidentally sideswipe cars by steering away from the holes, according to Taciano Mutuc, assistant vice president of the PNCC's North Luzon Tollway Division.

Mutuc urged motorists to bear with the repair work, the first to be done since the expressway was built 30 years ago. The road spans Balintawak in Caloocan City to Sta. Inez in Mabalacat, Pampanga.

Worst stretch

Traffic, he said, along the San Fernando-Apalit, Pampanga stretch, was made worse as the Lopez-owned Manila North Tollways Corp. (MNTC) closed the northbound track for upgrading and allotted one lane for the counter flow.

This scheme was adopted as the company began implementing its $371-million modernization and expansion project.

Mutuc said motorists would have to contend with the slow traffic along this stretch until September when the upgrading work is completed.

He said the patching up of potholes, which began on Monday, would be finished by yesterday in time for the opening of classes today and the observance of the Philippine Independence Day on June 12.

More traffic personnel

The repair is costing the PNCC about P200,000 daily, mainly on asphalt materials, Mutuc said.

Assistant Secretary Rene Maglangque of the Department of Transportation and Communications said the DOTC would convince the Manila North Tollways Corp. (MNTC) and its main contractor, Leighton Contractors Asia Ltd., to increase traffic personnel along the congested portion of the expressway to ease the flow of traffic.

"Many commuters and motorists (sic) have been complaining to us. During the heavy rains, they endured four to five hours of bumper-to-bumper traffic, so we could not blame them for seeking our attention on the matter. Although the DOTC has no direct control of the expressway, we will do what we can to help the people," he said.

Completion

Robbie Tañada, MNTC external relations and marketing manager, told reporters here that the upgrading of the 12-km long eastern portion of the expressway would be completed in September.

But the opening of the road's eastern portion is not expected to immediately improve the traffic situation.

Tañada said upon the opening of the eastern section, the western section would be closed for upgrading.

However, the western section will be closed only for two weeks because, unlike the low-lying and flood prone eastern section, the upgrading does not require embankment formation, he said.

Alternative routes

Mutuc advised motorists to use alternative routes.

Northbound motorists could exit to Pulilan, Bulacan, to access the old MacArthur Highway. The Sulipan Bridge in Apalit, Pampanga, is, however, being repaired at selected hours of the day, according to the Department of Public Works and Highways. The bridge is open only to light vehicles.

Mutuc said those going to Nueva Ecija may turn right to Pulilan and travel via Baliuag, Bulacan.

Motorists bound for Manila may skip the expressway by taking a route in Barangay Sto. Domingo in Mexico, Pampanga, to reach the San Simon viaduct of the NLEX.

The MNTC's $371-million North Luzon tollway project aims to modernize the 84-km stretch of the NLEX by converting it into a "world-class toll road system."

The modernization program includes the re-pavement and renovation of the existing toll road from Balintawak to Sta. Inez in Mabalacat.

The program, which was started last February, is to be completed in two years. *Tonette Orejas and Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

DPWH owes private contractors in Mindanao P430M

DAVAO CITY—Private contractors in Southern Mindanao have collectibles amounting to P430 million from the Department of Public Works and Highways as payment for various projects.

Dimas Soguilon, DPWH director for Southern Mindanao, said the total amount represented more than 1,000 projects.

"These are only small projects, and about 50 percent have not been paid," he said.

He said they already forwarded the project billing of the contractors to the regional office of the Department of Budget and Management that in turn forwarded it to its central office but they have not been informed when the the payment will be given.

"Each time (we ask about releases), DBM's answer was that there was no collection and they have no money," he said.

As a result, about 300 projects, including the construction of school buildings and public roads, have been put on hold.

"There's a big effect because the school buildings could be used for the school opening," he said.

He said it was the contractors' prerogative to stop the projects if the government failed to pay them.

One of the bigger projects in the region that have been stopped because of the failure of the government to pay is the Buhangin Underpass project worth P57 million. The DPWH still owes the project contractors, VT Lao Construction, about P24 million. *Joel Escovilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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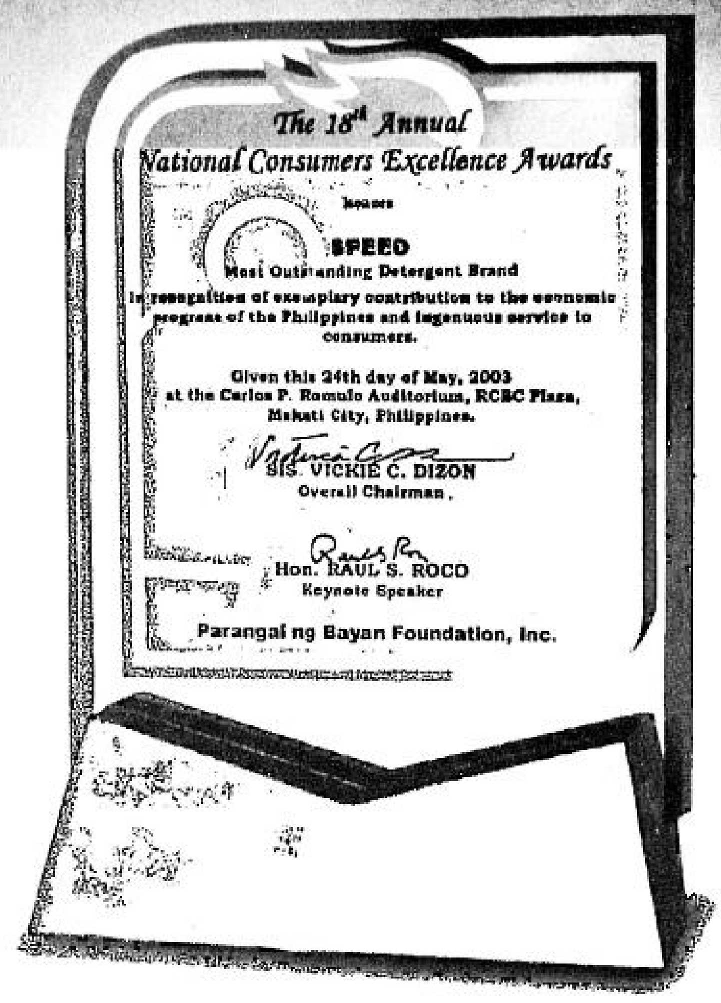

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Baguio NGOs go after smoke belchers

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Still stung by a 2002 World Bank report that listed Baguio among the most polluted cities, environment advocates here started recruiting volunteer "eco-warriors" who will accost and chastise smoke belchers.

The Baguio Regreening Movement (BRM) made this commitment on Thursday, World Environment Day, of 15 civic organizations and private firms, which are sponsoring squads of "eco-warriors."

These volunteers will be deployed in main streets to keep Baguio's pollution ratings within acceptable international standards, said Baboo Mondoñedo, one of the BRM originators.

Their prime targets are jeepney drivers. The volunteers would persuade erring drivers to submit to a smoke emission test and acquire technology that would reduce carbon dioxide emissions, Mondoñedo said.

A World Bank (WB) report cited Baguio among 10 major Philippine cities, which tested positive for pm10, the pollution unit for microscopic substances people are exposed to in a heavily polluted environment.

But the Department of Environment and Natural Resources maintained that the WB had misrepresented the city's pollution data.

"The World Bank should have (concluded) that Baguio City is the cleanest city in the Philippines," said Rolando Reyes, chief of the DENR's air quality division in the region.

BRM's "eco-warriors" are part of a five-point clean air program that will revitalize a once-robust regreening program, as well as institutionalize citizens' dialogues with City Hall on vital environmental policies, Mondoñedo said.

BRM, which also celebrated its 15th anniversary on Thursday, is one of the many environmental organizations here that have shaped public policy in Baguio.

The group helped craft an ordinance that penalizes people who harm or disfigure pine trees.

Baguio-based environmental groups here also successfully blocked efforts of a Taiwanese consortium to exploit the thickly forested Camp John Hay in the early 1990s.

But environmentalists were also alarmed by the WB report, and were on the verge of condemning it, said former Baguio Prosecutor Erdolfo Balajadia, BRM president.

Mayor Bernardo Vergara had questioned the WB findings.

Balajadia, however, said BRM chose restraint, and had instead qualified the WB report, and the media attention it drew, as a wake-up call for Baguio's environmental crusaders.

Reyes reported to the BRM here that the city's air quality had been improving, in the face of the WB's projections. He said the WB failed to account for the daily traffic volume at the lower section of Session Road, the city's main road.

He cited a traffic-rerouting scheme, which Vergara had briefly enforced in February and March after newspapers published the WB pollution report.

This traffic scheme converted Session Road into a one-way downstream route.

Reyes said the scheme reduced downtown pollution. But when two-way traffic was restored on Session Road in May, pollution ratings escalated again, he said.

Based on 18 air quality samples obtained from Session Road between Jan. 9 and May 27, lower Session Road registered an average of 220.52 unit grams of total suspended particulates (TSP), "which is still below the DENR standard of 230 ug," Reyes said.

Four of these samples were classified as "unhealthy" air, while three other samples fell into the category of "slightly unhealthy air."

Compared to lower Session Road, the air quality of the road's upper slope posted 47.47 ug based on six air samples between April 1 and May 27.

Failon victory upheld

TACLOBAN CITY—The House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal (HRET) has dismissed the election protest lodged against Leyte Rep. Ted Failon by former congressman Alfred Romualdez.

The HRET, in a promulgation dated May 29, said Romualdez failed to substantiate his allegations that fraud was committed during the 2001 congressional polls.

Failon, a broadcaster of ABS-CBN, said he felt vindicated by the decision.

"I feel happy and relieved. The decision finally confirms my victory," he told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

He said his victory against Romualdez proved that a person could fight a "giant" in honest and clean elections.

Failon, who ran as an independent, garnered 56,461 votes against reelectionist Romualdez of the Nationalist People's Coalition, who received 51,308 votes.

Romualdez's defeat came as a surprise." *Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Pagdanganan to look into farmers' case vs Revilla

ILOILO CITY—Agrarian Reform Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan said he would look into allegations of farmers that Sen. Ramon Revilla had attempted to evict them from a 25-hectare property in Silang, Cavite.

"I have to study the documents of the farmers first," Pagdanganan said during a press conference Friday night after he led the inaugural rites of an agrarian reform community in Buenavista, Guimaras.

He said what he knew of the farmers' allegations were based merely on news reports.

But he said he had talked to Revilla on the phone who told him that the issue was "a case of these people not paying the agreed leasehold rental."

Thirty-seven farm-families have asked the Department of Agrarian Reform to stop Revilla from evicting them from his property. They staged a picket at the DAR office in Quezon City on Wednesday to dramatize their plight.

The farmers led by the Samahan ng mga Magsasaka sa Cabangaan and the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas claimed their ancestors have been tilling the land since 1911.

The farmers said Revilla planned to evict them from the land within six months or when he would use the land. They suspected that the senator planned to convert the agricultural land to other uses like a residential subdivision or a golf course.

Revilla's son, action star and Videogram Regulatory Board chair Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. earlier said the farmers lived on his father's land without paying "even five centavos."

He has denied the allegation that his father forced the farmers out of the land.

But the farmers have refuted the claims of the younger Revilla. They said they have been paying rent to Senator Revilla over the years that they have been tilling the land.

Pagdanganan said his office would take "appropriate action" after he has seen the complaint and documents of the farmers. *Nestor P. Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau*

Cagayan Valley needs 2,000 new teachers

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Cagayan Valley needs at least 2,000 teachers as the number of enrollees this school year in the region's elementary and high schools reached 800,000, Department of Education officials said.

Teresita Domalanta, DepEd regional director, said they would implement two-shift classes and accept volunteers to solve the shortage of teachers.

She said local governments and their school boards also planned to hire additional teachers who would be given P3,000 in allowances.

Domalanta said there are enough classrooms in the region because the officials of Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino and the cities of Tuguegarao and Santiago have ordered the construction of additional 600 classrooms to accommodate students.

She said Cagayan Valley has a 1:8 textbook-student ratio and they are expecting additional delivery of textbooks from the DepEd within the school year. *Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Miner killed in cave-in

BAGUIO CITY—A miner was killed after a tunnel he was digging in Itogon, Benguet, caved in Thursday. Police said Gerardo Pagiw was digging through a pocket mine tunnel in Barangay Virac when a boulder pinned him down and killed him instantly. Residents retrieved Pagiw's body at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, about 30 minutes after the incident.

Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Robbers nabbed

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—Police on Friday arrested four members of a robbery gang victimizing couriers delivering remittances of overseas Filipino workers. Supt. Rayland Malenab, Pangasinan police investigation officer, said members of the Pine robbery group were arrested after robbing couriers from the MBA Express in Asingan town. Malenab identified the suspects as Ronald Pine, 38, the group's leader; Wilfredo Morales, 46; Robert Rolliog, 30; and Crisostomo Fernandez, 29. Police said several warrants have been issued for the arrest of Pine's members on charges of murder and robbery. Reports said the group robbed Ramil Tuvera, 28, and Mario Tuvera, 26, of P444,950 in cash that were to be delivered to the families of OFWs, in eastern Pangasinan.

Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Arson raps vs NPA

CABANATUAN CITY—Eighteen members of the New People's Army operating in Nueva Ecija were charged Thursday with arson and robbery for burning a Metro Manila-bound Baliwag Transit bus in Carranglan town on Tuesday. The charges were filed before the provincial prosecutor's office by Nueva Ecija police's task force on legal offenses. Among those charged were Emetrio Antalan alias Ka Yves, a top official of the NPA's Central Luzon revolutionary committee and head of the Nueva Ecija party committee, and Leopoldo Caluza alias Ka Mesyo and Ka Ambot, leader of the provincial guerrilla unit in Nueva Ecija. The NPA's Josepino Corpuz Command operating in Central Luzon claimed responsibility for the arson, saying it was punishing the bus firm for refusing to pay revolutionary tax.

Anselmo Roque, PDI central Luzon Desk

3 killed in collision

BAMBANG, Nueva Vizcaya—Three persons were killed while 35 others were hurt after a truck collided with a tricycle along the provincial road in Barangay Barat on Saturday. Killed were teachers Bernardina, 56, and Cirila Balicat, 62, and Severina Corpuz, 65, all of this town. The victims, who were on a tricycle, were on their way to the town proper when they hit a Kayapa town-bound truck. The truck, driven by Junard Lucas, 22, turned turtle after the collision, injuring its passengers, mostly vegetable farmers and traders who had come from the public market here.

Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Ex-rebel chief slain

CANDABA, Pampanga—The policeman, accused of the May 13 murder of the chair of a group of former Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan guerrillas, was found dead on May 26 here. A police report said the body of P03 Ramon Yabut was found on the road in Sitio Control, Barangay Pasig at 1 a.m. The body was found by SP01 Benedicto Pamintuan, the policeman investigating the murder case against Yabut. Yabut's death came 13 days after he was accused of killing Benito Torres inside the 9-Ball Videoke Bar, also in Barangay Pasig.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Rebels deny role in killing

MALOLOS CITY—The Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan (RHB), a breakaway group of the New People's Army in Central Luzon, belied claims of a human rights group that the former was behind the May 18 killing of two men in Macabebe, Pampanga. A certain Ka Tomas of RHB's Coastal Front based in Pampanga, said contrary to the claims of Karapatan, the RHB had nothing to do with the murder of Ferdinand Manuyag, 25, and his brother Pedro Jr., 23. He admitted that the RHB was involved in an encounter in Barangay Consuelo in Macabebe on May 18, but said they did not kill the Manuyag brothers.

Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

PhilRice branch

SCIENCE CITY OF MUNOZ—The Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) is establishing this year its branch station in Murcia, Negros Occidental. Leocadio Sebastian, PhilRice executive director, said the branch in Barangay Cansilayan, Murcia will be the institute's fourth in the country. Sebastian said the new 90-hectare station will develop locally adapted rice production technologies that would improve rice production in Negros Occidental.

Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Couples caught on a tomb

TABACO CITY—Village guards on Wednesday last week arrested a couple spotted on top of a tomb at the cemetery in Barangay Tagas. It was the second time the village guards arrested a couple at the cemetery in a compromising situation over the past two weeks. On Thursday, two weeks ago, village guards implementing the curfew ordinance for minors arrested the first couple found on top of a tomb. The couples were brought to the police station for counseling, and were released after.

Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

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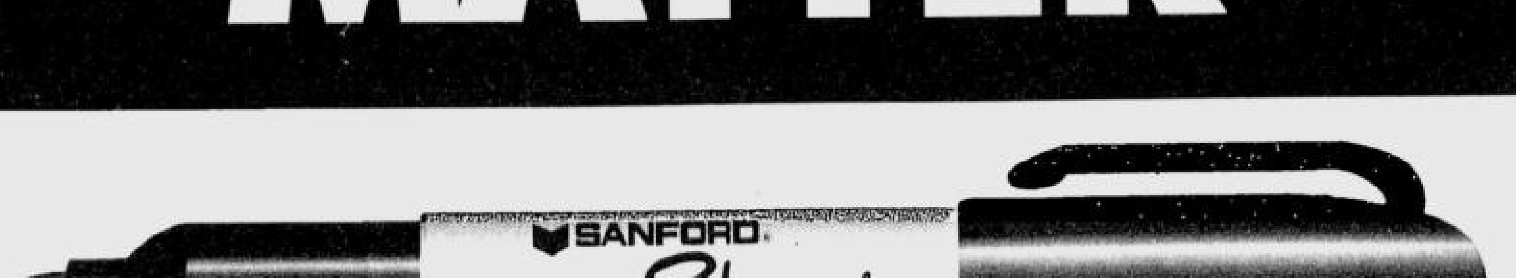

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Pikit evacuees persuaded to return home

PIKIT, North Cotabato—After failing in its past attempts, the government on Friday finally convinced residents of a war-torn village here to go back and end their months of distressing stay in the evacuation camps.

Government officials said the return of around 100 families to Barangay Bagoinged was a "good start" even though the number was only about a third of the village's population. They said this could help convince other refugees to return to their respective villages.

Mayor Farida Malingco admitted they were still trying to convince other residents to follow those who decided to go back. But she expressed optimism that hundreds of other refugees would soon trek back to their own villages including those from Gli-Gli, Kabasalan, Bulol and Buliok.

Bagoinged, which was the center of trade in the Buliok Complex, was totally ruined when the military launched an assault on the Moro Islamic Liberation Front on Feb. 11.

But before the war, villagers, who had been alerted of military movements in outlying areas, sought refuge in makeshift evacuation centers in the Poblacion.

As of Friday, traces of violence could still be seen in the village.

Those who agreed to come home to Bagoinged saw how the war devastated their village: bullet holes in school buildings, damaged houses and parched farmlands.

Malingco said the government gave the villagers some "goodies" to help them adjust to their lives outside of the evacuation centers.

Fr. Roberto Layson, OMI, Pikit Parish Interreligious Dialogue Coordinator, said the evacuees decided to go back because they felt it was relatively safe to.

He said the 10-day truce declared by the MILF helped the government convince the villagers to return home.

"The situation is still wait-and-see (sic) but these people are now willing to risk and try it out unlike before. I think the truce provided a space," Layson said.

Rakma, a mother of four, expressed her apprehension about the presence of the military. She said anything could happen after the government's 10-day ceasefire.

She said her family decided to go back home because they were tired of living in the evacuation camps.

Brig. Gen. Cardozo Luna, commander of the Army's 602nd Infantry Brigade, said they were trying to send a message to the villagers that the military was not an enemy.

He said soldiers are in the village "to prevent the enemies from coming in," referring to Moro rebels, most of whom are related to the villagers.

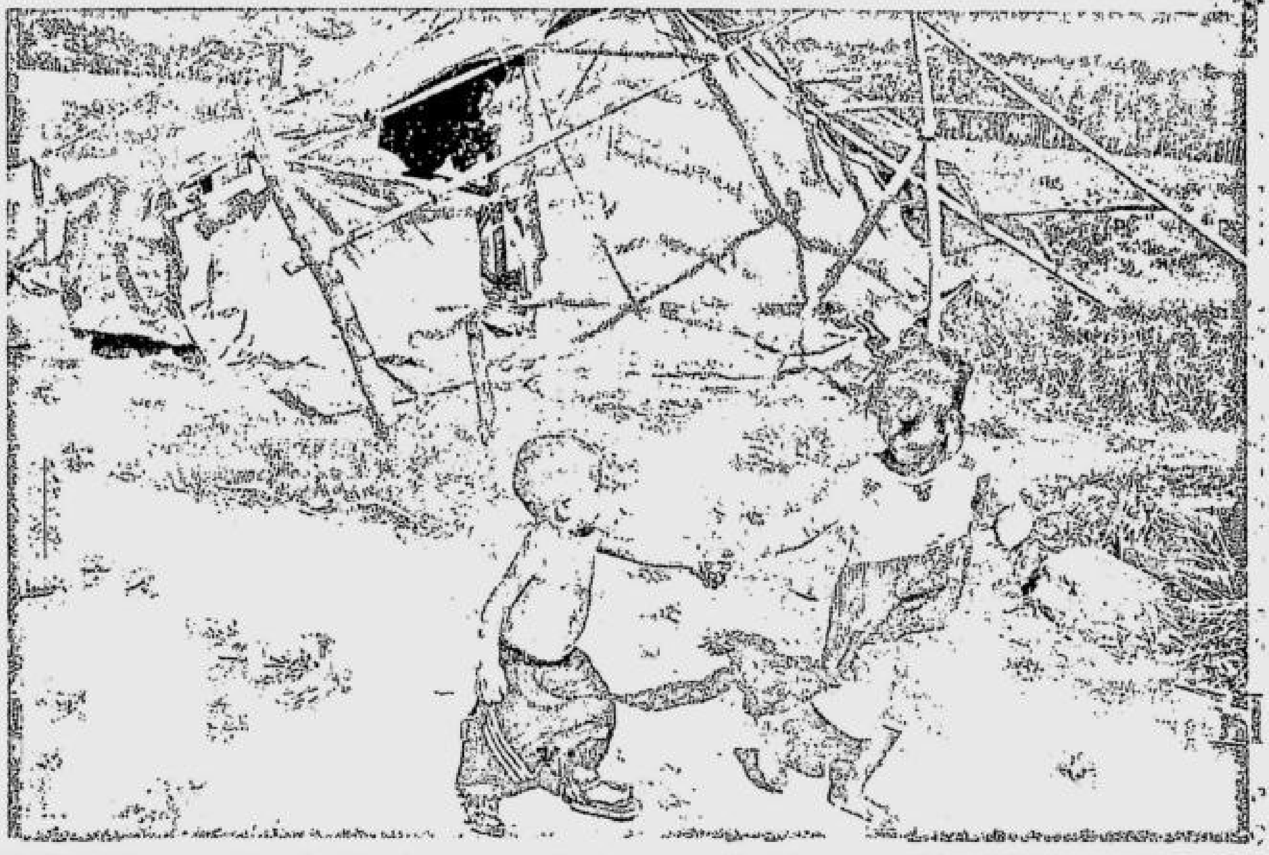
"We will be here as long as we are needed. We will leave the entire Buliok Complex if we will not be of use here anymore (sic). But for now, we will stay," Luna said.

Layson said the government's initiative to lead back the evacuees to their villages was an indication that something good was being done to resolve the Mindanao conflict.

"I've always been optimistic. I think the government will soon agree to talk peace with the MILF," he said.

Layson said it appears that the government and the MILF have entered into a silent agreement "for the sake of the suffering civilians."

In the Lanao provinces, the lull in fighting gave an opportunity to civic organizations to reach thousands of evacuees who have not had access to relief goods because of the tense situation during the past days. *Jeffrey M. Tupas and Jeffrey P. Maningo, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



THESE children are left to fend for themselves while their parents look for food at the evacuation center in Pikit, Cotabato.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Iloilo lawmaker justifies barring village execs from Lacson meetings

By Christine O. Avendaño

IT WAS a "leadership decision" that Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez, representative of the lone district of Iloilo city, said he made when he told barangay officials in his hometown not to attend any meeting being called by opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

Gonzalez said he reiterated his directive to Iloilo City barangay officials in a meeting with them yesterday. He said he asked them to consult first with him or with Iloilo City Mayor Gerry Treñas whenever they were invited for a meeting there.

"This is politics," he said in a phone interview, as he dismissed the statement of Lacson's supporters that what he did was unfair. "You impose your leadership and discipline to members."

Gonzalez confirmed he sent a letter to 180 barangay captains in his district asking them to refrain from attending meetings for political reasons of any possible presidential or local candidates in the 2004 elections. He said around 160 of them are identified with him.

The meeting with Lacson was supposed to take place last week but Gonzalez said he learned that the senator, who had already declared his intention to run for president next year, has left for Canada.

"Sen. Lacson can organize on his own and look for his own leaders but not our leaders . . . and use them for propaganda purposes," he said.

He said the opposition senator could issue invitations but "let us see if they would follow him."

Gonzalez said he believed that his directive to barangay officials "falls within the ambit" of a request that President Macapagal-Arroyo made to him and other leaders of the Lakas-CMD in a meeting in the Palace last month.

The President, he said, had requested them to keep the party together pending the nomination of presidential and senatorial candidates of the administration party and political parties it is coalesced with.

"I think the President was alarmed about the moves by some members to support other candidates," Gonzalez said.

Some 50 Lakas congressman have signed a resolution supporting the presidential candidacy of businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco. Other congressmen belonging to Lakas and coalition parties are supporting the presidential bid of former Sen. Raul Roco.

Gonzalez said the President wants to have a "say in the final decision" of the party and the coalition parties on whose presidential and senatorial candidacies they will support.

He said it was in that May 5 meeting that he urged President Macapagal to reconsider her decision not to run next year, and that the party said they would split if she didn't run.

"I told her she was the unifying force," Gonzalez said. But the President did not say anything, he added.

It was this belief that sent Gonzalez to write a letter urging the President to run next year. The deputy speaker sent his letter to Malacañang and the Lakas party, which had the support of 85 congressmen, some of whom had earlier supported a resolution for Cojuangco as president.

Pampanga groups start signature drive to protect historic high school

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Various groups here on Wednesday started a signature campaign to protect what looters had left of the historic Pampanga High School (PHS) in Barangay Sto. Niño.

The Foundation for Lingap Capampangan Inc. (FLCI), the City of San Fernando Historical and Cultural Society (CSFHCS) and the University of the Philippines in San Fernando launched the campaign after Gov. Manuel Lapid failed to act on the systematic pillage of the two-story structure near the provincial capitol grounds.

"How the Pampanga provincial government could disregard the heritage of the Kapampangan people whom, ironically, they are supposed to lead is indeed beyond comprehension. It is time to give them a wake-up call. It is time to fight for Pampanga's rich but endangered heritage," the groups said.

Signature forms are being circulated in Pampanga and various parts of the country where there are Kapampangans, according to Ivan Henares, spokesperson of the CSFHCS.

Students and alumni of the University of the Philippines (UP) in San Fernando, which used the old PHS building from 1980 to 1995, are actively joining the campaign, said Dean Juliet Mallari.

Kapampangan alumni of the UP, who are meeting on June 14 in Angeles City for a luncheon, are taking the campaign nationwide.

Henares said they wanted the provincial government to stop plans to demolish what was left of the building and honor the memorandum of agreement it signed with FLCI to start a Pampanga cultural center on the same structure.

He said the provincial government should "do all, in its power, to protect, preserve, secure and safeguard this historical relic for future generations of Kapampangans and Filipinos."

What remained of the rectangular-shaped structure are its concrete ramparts, dilapidated ceilings and rusty iron roof.

The FLCI, which last year agreed to jointly start a cultural center out of the PHS building, discovered the pillage when the Capitol Boulevard, closed for construction for more than a year, was opened last month to motorists.

Looters ransacked the structure of old hardwood from the lower and upper floors, doors, walls, stairs, wide capiz windows and posts.

The PHS was the first and only public high school in Pampanga since 1907. It used to be housed at the Buison Building (now the Pampanga Hotel).

The late Justice Jose Gutierrez David was among the PHS' first graduates in 1912. The late President Diosdado Macapagal, the first Kapampangan president, belonged to PHS Class of 1929.

The school produced a veritable list of leaders in government, education, sciences, arts and culture.

Provincial Administrator Benalfre Galang, who denied reports that he used the old hardwood in his home, said the provincial government had cancelled the plan to auction off the building since it had agreed with the FLCI to start a cultural center there.

The lack of security personnel made it difficult for the provincial government to protect the structure against looters, he said.

Galang said Lapid was initiating a dialogue with the leaders of the groups who wanted to preserve the building. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Closure of drug testing centers sought

ILIGAN CITY—The Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) has sought the closure of several drug-testing centers for their alleged fraudulent activities.

Most of the testing centers, which DDB wants to shut down, have been accredited by the Land Transportation Office, according to Cesar Posada, DDB chief legal officer and acting director for administration.

Posada said the LTO-recognized centers were issuing results even if clients had yet to undergo the exams.

He said some drug-testing centers were also selling test results to applicants.

Posada said the DDB wants to clamp down on these practices by allowing only the operation of drug-testing centers accredited by the agency.

Rodrigo Esmade, LTO-Iligan chief, said all drug testing centers in the city recognized by his office were recommended by the health department. *Jeffrey P. Maningo, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Bicol media want guns

LEGAZPI CITY—Alarmed by the series of killings among their ranks, some Bicol journalists are seeking to arm themselves for self-defense.

During a dialogue spearheaded by the Center for Community Journalism and Development (CCJD) and attended by journalists all over Bicol as well as government and nongovernmental groups, some mediamen voiced concern over the killings and suggested the carrying of firearms for self-defense.

Sherwin Asis, a broadcaster from Camarines Norte said a journalist must be armed solely for his protection.

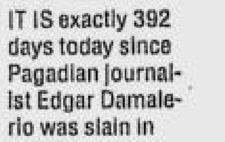
But Red Batario, Executive Director of CCJD has discouraged such move since "carrying a gun is not a guarantee of safety."

He said some of those on their list of murdered journalists even had firearms when the killings took place.

"We discourage it since we are supposed to be advocates (of) a gunless society," he clarified.

Among the other suggestions to address the killings of journalists are the organization of journalists; putting up a legal council to hasten the probe and prosecution of cases; establishment of media crisis intervention centers, crime-watch groups at the barangay level; and a national summit where journalists can deliberate on the issue. *Ronnie Lorejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Countdown for justice



WAPILE

IT IS exactly 392 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

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Bishop off to US, leaves fate to Vatican officials

From page A1

to take pity on him and not easily believe allegations that he had sexually harassed his former secretary.

"Don't believe these things right away, have pity on me," the bishop said in Filipino in an interview with Radyo Veritas at 10 p.m. Saturday.

Asked to address listeners, the bishop said: "Right now, a person can be accused of different things. But let's remember that to be accused is not to be (guilty) ... it would hurt if people would immediately believe these accusations against me."

"Let us remember that a person's name is very important to him. My name is also very important to me so I pray to God that should anyone accuse me of anything, may people not believe it right away," he said.

Bacani said he would leave for Kansas to visit his mother and to seek treatment for his diabetes from his brother there.

Gluttony for work

His diabetes, he said, was "acting up," probably due to overwork. If he had committed any sin, he said it would have been "gluttony for work."

Rañada expressed the belief that the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines was supportive of Bacani, who could be the most influential prelate in the country after Jaime Cardinal Sin of Manila and Ricardo Vidal of Cebu.

"I would like to believe that the CBCP supports him. Besides, he has been their collaborator for the good of the country and the Church itself," he said.

Bacani was scheduled to leave today for the United States, but Rañada said the case was not the main reason for the bishop's departure.

"There comes a time when bishops have to go on vacation. So I think the case is not the reason for the bishop's leave. His mother is sick and he is going to visit her in the US," Rañada said.

"Although he will also use his time to reflect on these recent events," he added.

"Dad, remember the secrets we used to share?"

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Post-ROTC . . .

From page A1

Quezon City.

Learn to do all these online, because the new National Service Training Program has gone hi-tech—at least for cadets from the University of Santo Tomas.

This means they won't have to drop and do 20 pushups in Sunday training. Instead, they'll learn the principles of community service, from manning traffic to delivering relief goods, online.

Evelyn Songco, NSTP coordinator of UST, came up with the online system called "blackboard" in 2001 after accusations of corruption, hazing, and even murder nearly wiped out the school's Reserve Officers Training Corps program.

The school, at that time, was still recovering from the murder of cadet Mark Welson Chua, allegedly at the hands of his superiors. His death prompted Congress to take up the issue and pass Republic Act No. 9163.

The NSTP law did not abolish ROTC but merely defanged the campus-based military program. It offered Civic Welfare Training Service and the Literacy Training Service which can be completed in a year.

The first program trains cadets on health care, rescue operations, entrepreneurship, environment protection, clean-up campaigns and other community-oriented activities.

The second develops students' character by getting them to teach basic courses such as English and Math to slum children.

Avoiding the problem

By putting these two programs online and letting the computer do most of the teaching, UST is hoping to avoid the problem some have associated with ROTC.

"Minimizing the interaction between students and instructors would lessen chances for bribery and corruption," said Prof. Rowena Castro, coordinator of the school's CWTS program.

The school, she said, was still trying to convince the defense department to draw up a similar program for ROTC.

Under the online system, Castro said, first-semester students would meet the course instructor only on orientation day on June 22, for preliminary exams in August, and during finals in October.

They'll spend most of their time logged on to www.tomasinoako.org. Civic Welfare has eight modules while Literacy Training has nine, all of them good for the entire first semester, Castro said.

The first five modules for both programs deal largely with NSTP history and the need for students to join worthwhile causes in their communities.

For Literacy Training, the rest of the modules will teach cadets basic tutoring skills such as preparing lesson plans, effectively communicating with children, and evaluating performance.

Actual training

Civic Welfare's remaining modules would most likely appeal to the daredevil. Besides lectures and research assignments on community service, they offer actual training on high-angle rescue operations, including rappelling and first-aid methods during the second semester, Castro said.

Modules are good only for a specific period, say, one week, and will end with an online multiple-choice or true-or-false quiz. Cadets can't change their answers as in typical classroom tests. Grades will be flashed onscreen right after the allotted time has lapsed.

"There's virtually no room for cheating," Castro said. "Students can also monitor their performance because they will see their grades after every quiz."

In the second semester, LTS cadets will tour far-flung communities or Metro Manila slums to tutor children for their on-the-job training, the professor said.

Castro said Civic Welfare students may apply at government agencies such as the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, National Disaster Coordinating Council, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

If accepted, they'll undergo training and will be on call in times of disaster and calamity, she said.

Roping up a building or manning rubber boats, she said, would definitely be more exciting than marching under the sun with a wooden rifle.

Those wanting to care for the old and abandoned may link up with centers like Golden Acres or Home for the Aged, she said.

At the end of the one-year course, school officials hope students would have learned the value of service and made concrete little changes in the community.

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Sex raps vs Bacani shock churchgoers

From page A1

We're convinced that Bacani's accuser is seeking nothing but justice."

De Jesus refused to describe how serious the allegation was but insisted it should merit no less than a full-blown investigation by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

De Jesus urged Bacani to postpone his trip to the United States to clear his name—"if indeed he's innocent." She also asked the Church to initiate a probe of the sexual harassment complaint.

Bacani is scheduled to leave today for Kansas to seek medical treatment for his diabetes and to attend to his ailing mother.

He is the second bishop in Metro Manila to be mired in a sex-related controversy this year.

Bishop Crisostomo Yalung, 49, was reported in January have sired a son and that he was secretly supporting mother and child while he was still the head of the Diocese of Antipolo. The Vatican announced Yalung's resignation as bishop of Antipolo on Dec. 7, 2002 but it was reported in the media only on Jan. 30, 2003.

De Jesus said Gabriela got wind of the alleged sexual harassment in early April when the secretary's mother phoned the group's help desk.

She said the mother had told the group that the second incident happened on March 26, 2003. The first was three years ago when the bishop was still assigned in Caloocan City.

2 versions

The forthnightly news magazine Newsbreak reported two versions of the second incident.

One claimed that Bacani had hugged and caressed his secretary when she came to his room in Novaliches to update him on a bank transaction.

The other version said that the bishop had attempted to kiss the woman.

Rañada said that while Bacani might have expressed affection inappropriately, there was no malice in his actions. He said the gestures did not constitute sexual harassment.

De Jesus said her group had yet to hear the full story and meet with the woman or her mother. But Church sources confirmed the mother's account, prompting Gabriela to take up the cudgels for the woman, she said.

She said she was wary that the Catholic hierarchy might close ranks to protect Bacani, among the most vocal Church leaders who actively opposed Marcos' reign and later helped draft the 1987 Constitution.

Known for his advocacy of the poor, Bacani is considered an activist in a Church considered a bastion of conservatism.

He acts as adviser to the El Shaddai group, an influential charismatic movement usually courted by politicians during elections.

Bacani's case had been brought to the attention of Papal Nuncio Antonio Franco, who was said to have advised the secretary not to file a formal complaint.

The woman supposedly acceded and Franco, in turn, reportedly brought up the matter to the Congregation of Bishops in the Vatican. But the woman also reportedly warned that she would go to court if Bacani did not resign.

Out-of-town trysts

Her accusation may not come as a shock to some parishioners in Paco, Manila, where Bacani was assigned as parish priest for 11 years starting in 1984.

Archbishop Oscar Cruz, former CBCP president, said he had received letters from parishioners in Paco denouncing Bacani's alleged affairs, according to Newsbreak. Some had staged a rally outside the Paco church to demand Bacani's ouster.

One letter mentioned Bacani's relationship with "MP," their out-of-town trysts, and public display of affection that scandalized those close to the bishop.

Another letter mentioned Bacani's relationship with a former teacher in Paco.

Cruz said he did not act on the letters because these were unsigned.

Despite the controversy, CBCP's official radio network, Radyo Veritas, announced that Bacani would go live on his regular program "Bishop's Move" yesterday at 4:30 p.m.

Veritas news writer Amador Tribiana had told the INQUIRER that the bishop would not be present at the booth but would broadcast via phone patch.

But minutes before the program was to begin, the station announced that Bacani would not be available due to "unexpected circumstances."

The station instead read Bacani's June 7 statement in which he apologized "for the consequences of any inappropriate expression of affection to my secretary" on March 26. *With a report from Christian V. Esguerra*

Education in South also war casualty

From page A1

academic year 2000-01.

Another reason: Drop-out rates in Mindanao, particularly in the three regions, are by far the highest in the Philippines.

In the ARMM, almost 24 percent of elementary school students drop out of school—almost twice the Mindanao average of 12.3 percent, more than thrice the national average of 7.18 percent. At the high school level, the drop-out rate in the ARMM is 12.51 percent, above the Mindanao average of 11.25 percent and one and a half times higher than the national average of 8.7 percent.

Given these dismal statistics, it is no surprise that Mindanao was the worst performer in almost all standard exams, such as the National Elementary Achievement Test, the National Secondary Assessment Test (NSAT) and Science and Technology exams.

In 1999, only 4 percent of Mindanao's examinees passed the S & T exams—down dramatically from 10 percent the previous year. (In 1999, Visayas averaged a passing rate of 5.1 percent; Luzon came in at 8.2 percent.)

Even teachers did not fare better, with only 18 out of 100 teachers passing the licensure exam in 1997 and only 20 in 1998, the lowest in the Philippines.

Education forum

In a recent education stakeholders' forum led by Paul G. Dominguez, presidential regional development adviser and PBSP vice chair, it was confirmed that some P33.45 billion was needed to be injected into the Mindanao educational system for it to catch up with the rest of the country.

The Medina study showed that, on the grade school level, Mindanao will need at least 11,152 more teachers, 7.115 million textbooks, 12,758 classrooms and 969,337 desks and armchairs.

On the secondary level, Mindanao will need 6,736 new teachers, 2.186 million textbooks, 7,061 classrooms and 448,423 armchairs.

But Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus has told business leaders and foreign aid groups in Davao that there was very little money available to improve education. He said 90 percent of the department's budget went to teachers' salaries.

In response, the PBSP—an association of companies practicing corporate social responsibility—has developed the Mindanao Peace and Development Plan, which focuses on education as a weapon against war and poverty. This means marshaling the help of various corporate sponsors and foreign donors to pick up where the government has left off.

Peace Institute

Among the PBSP's partners in education working at the grassroots is the Peace Institute of the Ateneo de Zamboanga. This facility takes the lead in including peace education in the curriculum of 75 schools in Zamboanga, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi.

In Basilan, the PBSP has joined hands with PhilAm Foundation for the Aid for Basilan Children Fund. The Fund provided some P1.3 million worth of books, uniforms and school items to benefit more than 500 first- and second-graders of Lamitan Elementary School.

Another 2,000 children traumatized by the conflict in Central Mindanao have received help in Pikit, North Cotabato, under the Balik Kalipay program of the University of the Philippines' Center for Integrative and Development Studies, through the help of the Danish embassy.

Mirant Foundation, one of the country's biggest firms, invested in the PBSP's Project Big Star by providing facilities such as computer laboratories for the youth of Mindanao to be acquainted with information and communications technology.

Other PBSP projects are outlined in the long-term plan to support the island's growth, which started as early as 1989.

"It is hoped that these projects will continue to leave high marks not only on the Mindanao people's academic report cards but also on the region's improved economic and social standing, with new hopes of healing the ravages of terror and protracted conflict," the PBSP said.

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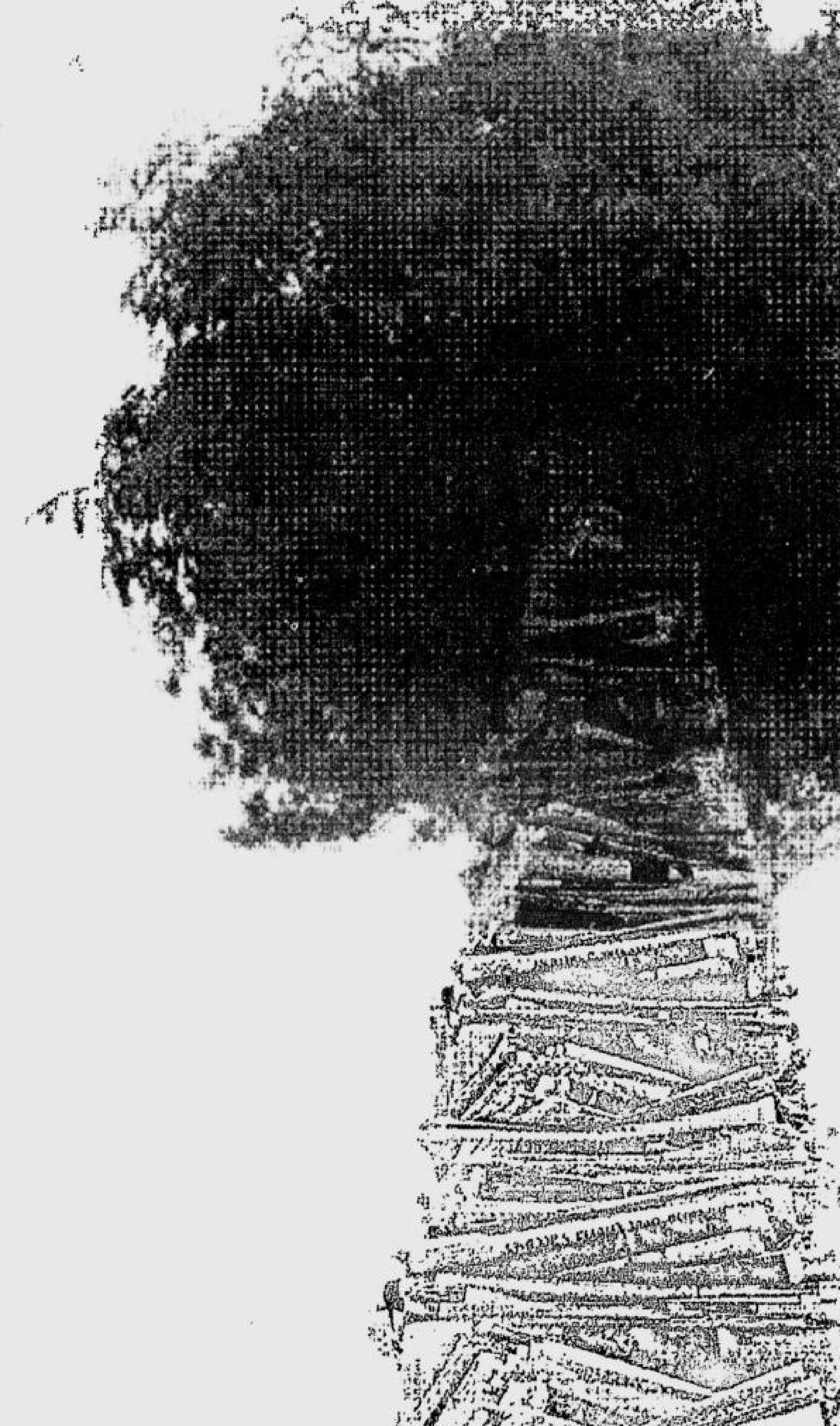

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
News that makes a difference

Grumbling goes on despite RP growth

From page A1

worst of the SARS epidemic. "Clearly the Philippines is now in its healthiest state for the last five years," ING Financial Markets said in a new report.

But direct investors are not as happy as portfolio investors.

Japanese Ambassador Kojiro Takano told the press last week that Japanese investors were extremely worried about inconsistent government policies, poor infrastructure, budget deficit problems and the poor peace and order situation.

The American Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines also issued similar warnings and called for stronger reforms. The chamber cited the costs of bureaucracy, electricity, labor and transport which are higher than regional competitors.

Not as impressive

Benvenuto Icamina, vice president of the Manila-based Wallace Business Forum, said GDP and inflation figures might impress portfolio investors but not those who want to put up factories.

"Those kind of figures can help short-term investments like the stock market but the investments that are here for the long-term need a look at the long-term issues like peace and order, infrastructure and the way the government is being run," said Icamina, whose firm advises multinationals here.

He said his company's surveys had found that few foreign companies were closing shop but that "most are not expanding or only expanding at a minimal scale."

Carlos Leung, an economist with the University of Asia and the Pacific, said investors' concerns were long-term problems that the Philippines has difficulty handling.

"One thing hard about the Philippines is policies keep on changing, one administration after another. We have never been known for long-term planning. Always short-term or medium-term," he said.

But Cecilia Tanchoco, an economist for the Bank of the Philippine Islands, said the Macapagal administration had made major progress and preliminary indications were that the budget deficit for the first three months of 2003 would be under the official ceiling.

"Fundamentally, what we're seeing is that there is some improvement. The fiscal front, it's being contained, it's being managed well. That's a positive development that has to be recognized."

However, she warned that if exports did not pick up and consumption was not sustained, then GDP growth this year would be be at only 3.5 to 4 percent.

Senators

Opposition, as well as administration senators, also expressed skepticism about the government's economic data.

"It looks like [Palace officials] are doctoring economic (figures) just to mislead people into believing that the economy is all right when it is not," said Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

Pimentel said the abject poverty in Mindanao showed the Macapagal administration has done little to alleviate the plight of poor Filipinos.

"There is economic growth when there is food on the table and jobs for those willing and able to work," he said. He called on the Macapagal administration to come up with data that the country could easily confirm "with their stomach."

Senate President Franklin Drilon said it was inappropriate to report economic growth figures without reference to a reasonable historical period and to other social factors, such as the staggering poverty level of 35 percent of the population.

"Is the growth enough to make a dent on the high poverty threshold? Or is it barely enough to maintain the status quo?" Drilon asked.

Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda said that the opposition's view on the economy was correct.

"Somehow, one gets the impression that all this growth being bandied about is only on paper," she said in a statement.

Legarda said any report of economic gains would continue to sound hollow to the majority of Filipinos. "About 200,000 more workers lost or failed to land jobs in 2002, swelling the ranks of the unemployed for the year to 3.4 million from 3.2 million in the previous year," she said.

Legarda said that the rising cost of living compounded by "shrinking incomes, a perception of widespread bankruptcy, homelessness and a rising tide of criminality rendered all the positive news about the economy bereft of any impact on the people—where it should matter most."

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Lone witness vs mayor recants

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE LONE witness in the the case against Iriga Mayor Emmanuel Alfelor and 11 others for the killing of three persons in December 2002 in Camarines Sur has recanted.

Witness Eduardo B. Villanueva is now saying he did not see the killer. His lawyer Roberto Camarista also wants him out of the custody of the National Bureau of Investigation.

"My conscience is bothering me so I want to tell the truth that I really did not see what happened on Dec. 4, 2002," Villanueva said in Filipino in a hand-written letter. "I'm ready to explain my side if I am summoned."

The NBI used Villanueva's earlier statements to charge in March 2003 Alfelor and 11 others with the killing of Reynaldo Licup, Geoffrey Remodo and Rommel Barillos.

Villanueva had said he saw a Jessie Intia kill the three men inside Foodhaus and Videoke Bar in Barangay San Nicolas, Baao, Camarines Sur. Intia allegedly was a frequent visitor to Alfelor's house.

The NBI said Alfelor was jealous of Licup due to his frequent meetings with the mayor's wife Madeleine. Licup was a local employee of the Department of Trade and Industry and met with Madeleine for her projects.

The mayor's wife later left Alfelor and accused the mayor of abusing her. She also allegedly heard Alfelor's men planning "to exterminate" Licup.

Besides Alfelor and Intia, Iriga administrator Aldo Turiano, SP01 Armando Padi, Bong Gazmin, Rita Villanueva-Turiano, Satiago Tampoco, Richard Nacario and four unidentified men were included in the charge sheet.

The DOJ is studying the implications of Villanueva's recantation.

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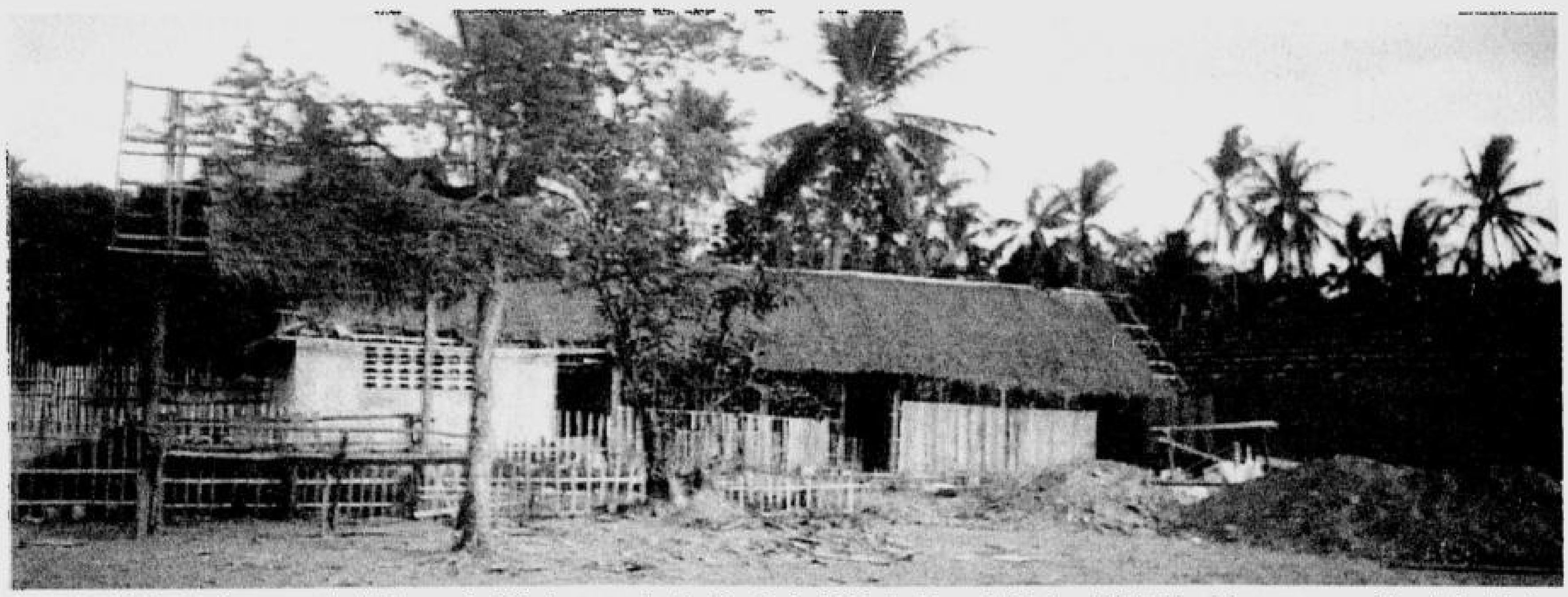
No more classes under a tree for students on Romblon island



FOR their children's sake, parents built these makeshift classrooms for the Don Carlos M. Megias Memorial National High School three years ago. The students just have to contend with dust and rains.

PHOTOS BY NAZARENE ROMANO

From page A1

one is unfinished. [The teachers and students still use it, even though they are always soaked when it rains.]

A congressman also funded one classroom put up in December 2002. Its door and windows were attached only recently.

Coconut farmers

Frustrated at the trickle of government funds, the parents, mostly coconut farmers, took it upon themselves to build more classrooms, however makeshift.

At the start of the academic year in 2000, they put up a classroom using mainly coco lumber. It only had a dirt floor.

The parents built another classroom made of the same light material in 2001.

And in February last year, the parents again came together to put up a row of classrooms.

Their contributions ranged from P10 to P1,500. The municipal and provincial governments donated P50,000 and P90,000, respectively, for labor and material. The money ran out, however, before the walls could be put up.

A classroom, according to the Department of Public Works and Highways, costs P375,000 to build. The DepEd wants to bring down the cost to P300,000.

Overworked teachers

Overworked and underpaid as they are right from the start, the teachers have not stopped trying to find ways to put up the most basic need of a school: classrooms.

"The problem really is the lack of classrooms. That's why we have several dropouts. How can we encourage the students to go to school if they don't have a school to go to?" said Romano, who was named officer in charge three years ago.

In 2001, when their school was mostly just an open field, the teachers decided to hold the graduation rites for the first time on the school grounds.

The students helped put up a makeshift stage.

"The [parents] wanted to hold it elsewhere, maybe at the [municipal] auditorium. But I wanted them to see the real state of our school. Why should we hide our school?'" Romano said.

With 1,000 enrollees this year, Romano said he and the other teachers would try to fit in all the students in the available classrooms in their school.

Their alternative is to hold classes at the Romblon State College.

With only 25 teachers, the school also needs more faculty members.

Joseph Fadri, who was division superintendent for Romblon until recently, knows only too well the state of the Don Carlos M. Megias Memorial National High School.

The lack of the basics is also the case for most other public high schools in Romblon, and for the rest of the country for that matter, he said.

If he could make a wish, Fadri said he would be content if the DepEd could provide the "basics": classrooms, chairs, textbooks and more teachers.

"The needs are many, that's why everyone helps out because the government doesn't have the money for these needs," he said.

When classes open this week, the teachers, students and parents of Don Carlos M. Megias Memorial National High School will be looking forward to the completion of their classrooms, and to the pledges made by their politicians.

They hope to have a science laboratory, a faculty office and a computer—but these can wait. The classrooms come first.

THIS is the first classroom built by the Department of Education for the Don Carlos M. Megias Memorial National High School in 2000. The budget was released in 1999. The other classroom was built by the San Fernando municipal government.

No bath, no . . .

From page A1

Taiwan.

Though the World Health Organization had already taken the Philippines out of the list of countries with SARS cases, Soliman said the government would still push through with stringent measures to keep the country safe from the disease.

He said government officials had agreed to require lessons on cleanliness in the school curriculum. Teachers have been instructed to remind students never to abandon proper hygiene such as brushing their teeth and taking a bath regularly.

Students will also be advised to cover their mouths while sneezing and to refrain from attending class if they are sweating heavily.

In the SARS seminar, Soliman said, students would be encouraged to assist janitors in maintaining cleanliness on campus.

Parents will undergo a similar program through parents-teachers associations, he said.

"Sa dami ng problema ng bayan, hindi natin kailangan maabala pa ng sakit!"

Marami nang suliranin ang ating bayan. Huwag nating hayaan na ito'y madagdagan pa. Kailangan labanan natin ang sakit.

Siguraduhing laging malinis ang ating katawan at paligid. Palakasin ang resistensya sa tulong ng wastong pagkain, sapat na pahinga at pag-inom ng vitamins araw-araw.

Ang maagap, may laban sa sakit. Dahil ngayon, higit kailanman, BAWAL MAGKASAKIT.

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Sen. Loren Legarda

NGAYON, HIGIT KAILANMAN,
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'Megadike' project in Taguig pushed

By Leila B. Salaverria

THERE'S no stopping the "megadike" project in Taguig, which the Metro Manila Development Authority would soon handle and is set to be completed in two to three years.

According to Deputy Chair Cesar Lacuna, the MMDA is set to ink a memorandum of agreement with the Public Works and Highways department to gain control of the P2.9-billion West Manggahan Flood Control Road Dike project.

Lacuna said the move came after responsibility for the flood situation of Metro Manila was transferred to the MMDA last year.

Aside from personnel and the budget, foreign funded flood-control related projects also have to be placed under the MMDA's jurisdiction. The Japan Bank for International Cooperation is funding the megadike project.

Lacuna said the 9.8-km megadike, which would stretch from Taguig to Taytay in Rizal, is 15 to 20 percent complete, and if the construction works proceed as scheduled, the dike will be completed in 2005 or 2006.

He added that the current protest movements against the dike would not be enough to stop the project.

"The MMDA will continue with the project because Taguig needs it," he said. Lacuna added that the need is still there even if floods in the area had noticeably lessened this year.

Residents of Taguig earlier protested the project, saying the dike would turn large tracts of land in the town into marshlands.

Residents of other coastal towns have also been protesting the project, saying their farmlands and livelihood will be devastated.

Politics threatens Cainta's cityhood bid

By Nelson Flores

POLITICS is getting in the way of Cainta town's bid of becoming the next city in western Rizal, according to Mayor Nicanor Felix.

In a recent interview, Felix blamed certain provincial board members in the delay of the town's cityhood bid.

He said some board members, whom he refused to name, were raising "baseless opposition" to the establishment of Cainta City.

Felix noted that the municipal council resolution seeking the creation of Cainta City was forwarded to the Provincial Board last year but it was only acted upon early last week.

Among the issues reportedly being raised by opponents of Cainta's cityhood bid was its current border dispute with neighboring Taytay town.

The mayor lamented that cityhood would not prejudice the outcome of the dispute because the case could be settled in court.

Felix said that although the provincial government would lose Cainta's contribution, which represents 35 percent of the town's annual income, Rizal would benefit because Cainta would no longer get allocation from the provincial fund.

For Cainta, cityhood would bring additional income because it could raise taxes from real estate and the production of native delicacies.

Meanwhile, Cainta council majority floor leader Telesforo Francisco said Cainta was qualified to become a city as provided in the Local Government Code.

The Code requires that a town have two consecutive annual budgets of 100 million and a population of over 100,000 or a land area of 100 square kilometers.

Randy laid to rest finally

RANDY DIAZ, the teenager who fell into a ventilation chamber and drowned in an aqueduct of the Manila Water Co. Inc. last May 17, was finally buried last Saturday morning.

Even if Diaz's family had wanted to have a longer wake, the Department of Health had asked the family to bury Diaz immediately for sanitary reasons and health concerns.

"Health officials were concerned because the body of Diaz was at an advanced stage of decomposition," said Manila Water media relations manager Ranulfo Habaluyas.

Diaz's funeral was originally set by his family on Tuesday. But he was buried three days earlier at the Bagbag Public Cemetery in Novaliches, Quezon City.

Habaluyas explained that according to DOH officials, it was standard procedure to secure and immediately bury the body of Diaz. *Amy Remo*

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Rizal Avenue ...

From page A23

streets will be open to the traffic that will be displaced from the main thoroughfare.

Gleaming on the prospects of a revitalized Avenida, Atienza noted that if only 10 percent of the 600,000 daily commuters of the Light Rail Transit would go down to the avenue, then there would be good business in the area.

"We will be talking to building owners to improve their structures so that the vendors selling their wares on the streets could graduate into shop owners," the mayor said.

The beautification of the avenue was inspired by the success of Plaza Miranda and Baywalk on Roxas Boulevard.

Atienza said Roxas Boulevard before its improvement was almost as dingy and as scary as Avenida .

"Nobody wanted to stroll along the bay. The beautiful sunset and the fragrant sea breeze of yore was already forgotten," he shared.

Now, Atienza disclosed, Baywalk is constantly brimming with people.

"We're hoping that Avenida will soon have a taste of the same enthusiasm and popularity," the mayor said.

Hand-painted...

From page A22

lie's Angels."

Villasin has been working for Sagmit for four years now, starting as a maintenance man.

"When the billboards were ready, we brought them to the site or the theater and installed them. On days when there were no jobs (movies change on Wednesdays and Thursdays), I would watch the painters. I learned a lot just by watching. I started painting on scrap corrugated board. I dreamed of becoming a billboard painter so I would practice on my own until dawn."

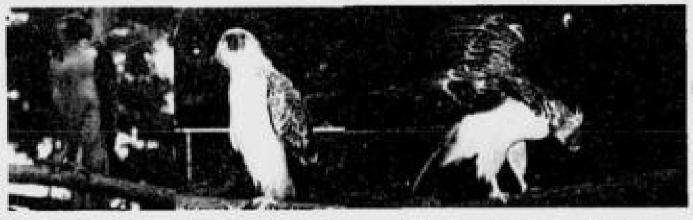
Villasin was doing the finishing touches to a four-by-eight-foot billboard of Robin Padilla's "Alab ng Lahi."

He was finally promoted to painter, and went home to Ormoc to tell his parents the good news, Villasin said. He also sketched his mother, who cried when she learned her son had so much talent.

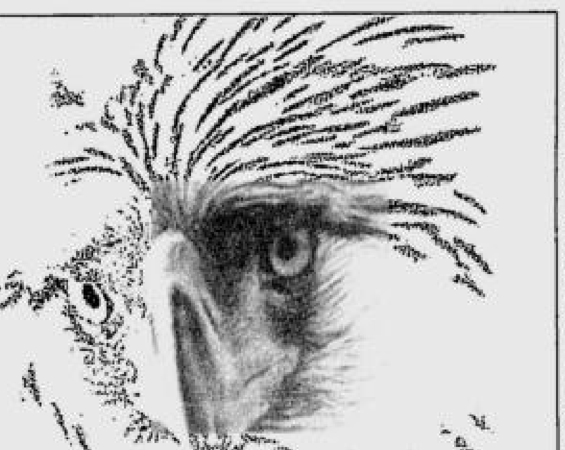
Villasin is one of Sagmit's painter. His two children have already started painting anime characters on cartolina.

Among the movie stars Villamin has painted, Judy Ann Santos or Juday remains his favorite.

He still has to see her in person, but Villasin will never forget her face.



Novartis eagles (from left) PANGARAP, MAGINOO and KAHAYAG at the PEF Conservation Center in Malagos, Calinan, Davao.



HOPE FOR THE PHILIPPINE EAGLE

By Vivien Lee Labastilla

For the past 20 years, the drop in the population of the Philippine Eagle has been considerably alarming. It is believed that only 100 to 200 eagles exist in the wild. Formerly known as the Monkey-eating Eagle, the Philippine Eagle has been a powerful symbol of the country's natural heritage. In fact, it is one of the largest and most majestic eagles in the world. But despite its huge size (measuring one meter in height on average and weighing 6.5 kilograms), its awesome strength and great wings that could span to a length of seven feet, the challenge to free the Philippine Eagle from the endangered species' list remains.

Significantly, the challenge has been met by the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) and the Novartis Animal Health. They offered hope for the Philippine Eagle. In the recently concluded 3rd MOA signing at the Villamor Airbase, both parties signified not only their strong desire and passion to give a better future for the Philippine Eagle but also to bring this commitment to a higher level. PEF President Carlos Pedrosa said, "The MOA signing shows the real commitment of Novartis not only to the PEF but also to the fight against environmental degradation in the country. This partnership with Novartis is invaluable."

The PEF believes that the fate of the vanishing Philippine Eagle, the health of the environment and the quality of Philippine life are inextricably linked. By using the eagle as a flagship for conservation, it hopes to address a host of issues associated with the conservation and management of wildlife in the Philippine rainforest. Its programs include: field research, captive breeding, community-based initiatives and conservation education.

On the other hand, Novartis Animal Health Country Unit Head Jeremiah Macias said, "This partnership with PEF brought our commitment to protect the eagles and our environment to another level. It also reinforced our corporate social responsibility of giving back what is due to the environment. If we take care of the habitat of the Philippine Eagle, we also preserve our environment for our children and the future generations."

Novartis Animal Health, a distinguished leader in animal healthcare worldwide, is the only animal health company that is a member of the PEF. It has already adopted three eagles from the PEF. Macias said, "Two years ago, we adopted a newly-hatched eagle and we named it Maginoo (Gentleman). This year, we are adopting two more, Pangarap (Dream) and Kahayag (Light in the Visayan dialect), born through artificial insemination." The adoption entails the construction of enclosures for these eagles in Mindanao and an annual maintenance support of P300,000 (P100,000 for each eagle), as well as product promotions to raise additional funds.

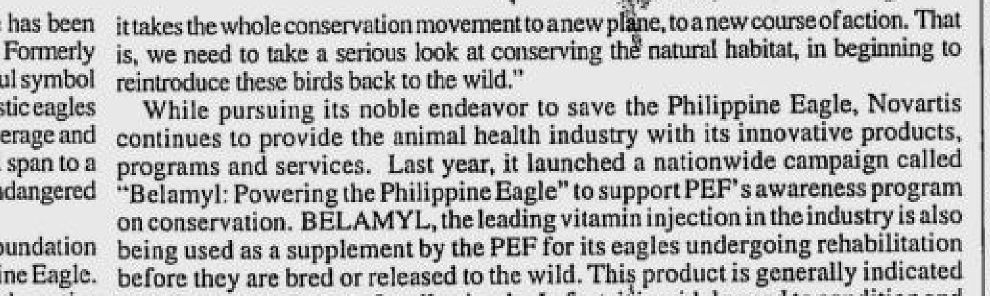
To date, there are still 29 birds that are still orphans. PEF Executive Director Dennis Salvador said, "With successful breeding, we expect to breed more. What is significant about it is that we're telling the public that we now have a hand in breeding the eagles successfully in the wild. And it takes the whole conservation movement to a new plane, to a new course of action. That is, we need to take a serious look at conserving the natural habitat, in beginning to reintroduce these birds back to the wild."

While pursuing its noble endeavor to save the Philippine Eagle, Novartis continues to provide the animal health industry with its innovative products, programs and services. Last year, it launched a nationwide campaign called "Belamyl: Powering the Philippine Eagle" to support PEF's awareness program on conservation. BELAMYL, the leading vitamin injection in the industry is also being used as a supplement by the PEF for its eagles undergoing rehabilitation before they are bred or released to the wild. This product is generally indicated as a dietary supplement for all animals. In fact, it is widely used to condition and improve the overall performance of stallions, bulls, game fowl as well as boars.

Macias who has been recently appointed as Chairman of the PEF's Scientific and Technical Committee, believes that saving the Philippine Eagle and protecting its habitat goes beyond mere annual monetary donations. He emphasized the need for more collaboration with fellow donors as well as potential sponsors and other interested parties.

Evidently, the partnership between PEF and Novartis Animal Health goes beyond breeding eagles in captivity and monetary donations. It is about serving the mission of promoting the survival of the Philippine Eagle, the biodiversity it represents and the sustainable use of our forest resources for future generations to enjoy.

With responsible citizens joining hands to fulfill this mission, there is a lot to hope for so that our children's children will be able to live in a healthy environment and be able to gaze at the world's noblest flier – the Philippine Eagle.



Novartis Animal Health Country Unit Head Jeremiah Macias (2nd from right) together with Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) President Carlos Pedrosa, Executive Director Dennis Salvador and Board Members Gen. William Hotchkiss and Col. Honrado at the recently concluded 3rd MOA Signing at Villamor Airbase.

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Fund lack may derail traffic plan

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE FATE of the planned Cooperative Controlled Route, a project meant to ease traffic congestion along Edsa, is threatened by an all too familiar problem — lack of funding.

The Metro Manila Development Authority did not have the P140 million needed to develop a five-hectare lot near Baclaran which would serve as a dispatching area for buses, according to Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel de Dios.

Vergel de Dios said the MMDA had been given P100 million to fund the north and south intermodal terminals but it was not enough.

The five-hectare proposed terminal needs to be paved with concrete. Also offices and waiting sheds have to be put up.

The Public Estates Authority, which donated the land, also could not afford to develop the area, Vergel de Dios said.

In an effort to solve the problem, the traffic director disclosed that the MMDA was asking a commercial establishment beside the proposed terminal to help in the development of the area since its patrons would benefit from the project.

Earlier, the traffic director said the controlled route system was scheduled for implementation this month.

Under the controlled route system, buses plying Edsa will have to go through one of two terminals located on each end of the highway.

These will have to wait in line until they are dispatched by traffic personnel monitoring passenger influx on Edsa.

Buses will be deployed as the need arises to maximize their load and limit the number of vehicles on the road.

LATE SPORTS

Tigers nip Phone Pals

By June Navarro

IT WAS a shot Jimmy Alapag wasn't supposed to make.

But Alapag unintentionally converted his bonus free throw in the final 3.2 seconds to give the Coca-Cola Tigers enough room to hammer out a 94-91 victory over Talk N Text last night in the quarterfinals of the Samsung-PBA All Filipino Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

The win was the second straight for the Tigers, who clinched at least a playoff for a semifinal slot. The Phone Pals dropped to 1-1.

The Tigers seemed to have the game wrapped up with a 92-87 lead with five seconds to go, but Alapag nailed a three-pointer from deep right while drawing a foul from Ato Morano.

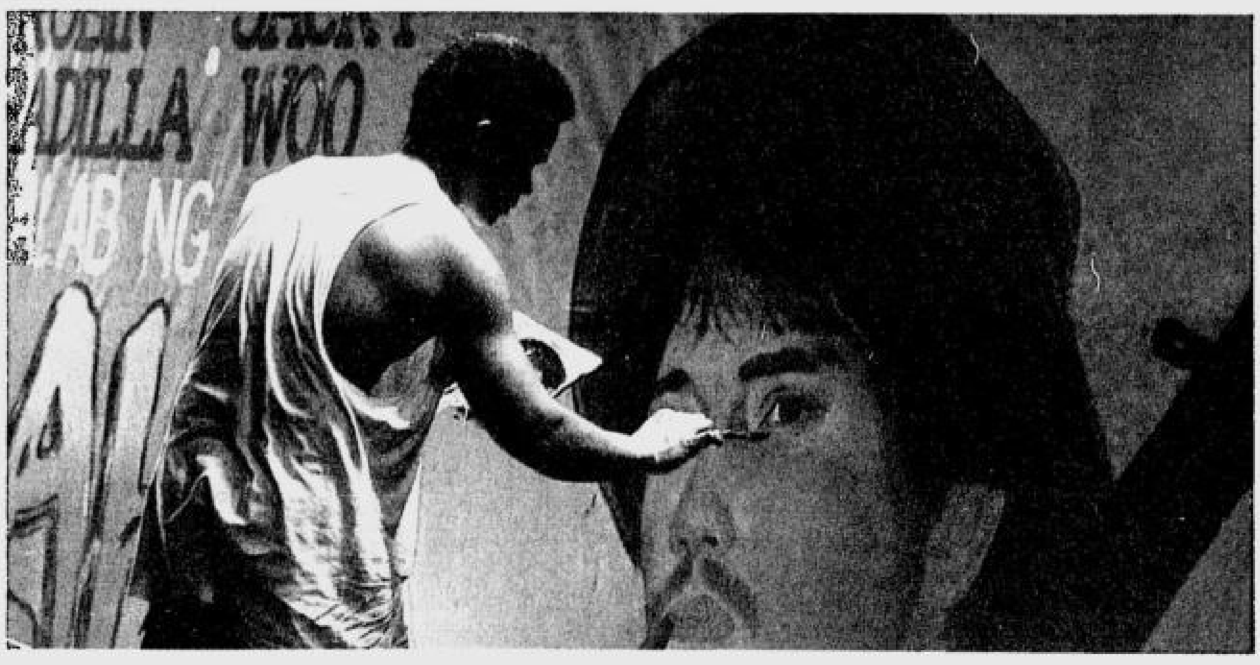
Talk N Text coach Joel Banal instructed Alapag to miss the free throw and give his team a chance at tying the count with an offensive rebound.

In the other game, Batang Red Bull tripped Barangay Ginebra, 101-93, to enhance its chances of making the semifinal round.

Professor defends use of Pinoy English

RICHARD Signey, professor of English as a second language at Languages International, will talk before the Rotary Club of San Juan at Club Filipino on June 12, and the Northwestern University of the Philippines Alumni Chapter at the Manila Polo Club on June 18.

Signey recently created some amount of agitation with his impassioned defense of Pinoy English, saying Filipinos can speak in another language other than Pilipino but be willing to die for the country if the need arises.



COMPETING with digital technology, billboard painter Dodong Villasin does the finishing touches on this larger than life image of Robin Padilla on canvas, which can be done on a computer in seconds. PHOTOS BY ED SANTIAGO

Metro hand-painted billboards soon to be extinct pop art form

By Elvira Mata
Contributor

HE HAS painted actress Judy Ann Santos several times, and he knows her face by heart.

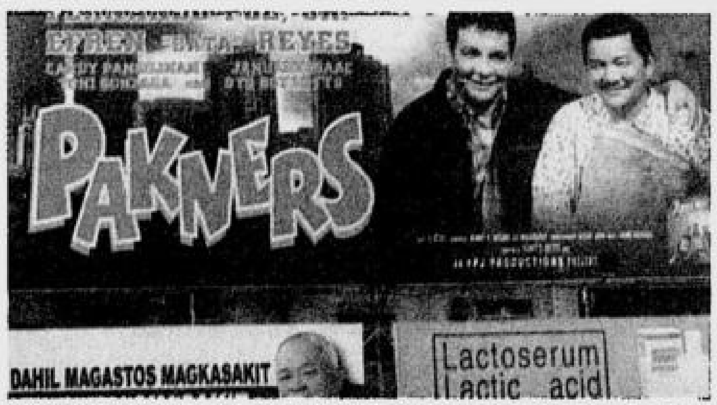
But like most billboard painters, Dodong Villasin, 38, is engaged in a fast vanishing trade that has embodied Philippine pop culture like Kenkoy and the jeepney for several decades.

For the craft of hand-painted billboards is gasping its last, thanks to technology which has ushered in digital large-format printed billboards, streamers, buntings, banners, streamers, among others.

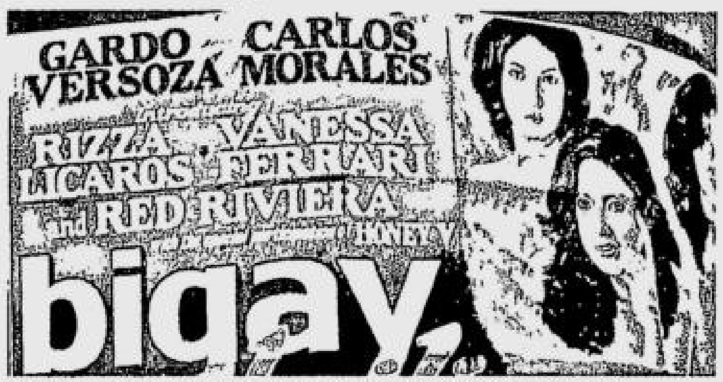
Just several years ago, 12-by-12-foot canvas hand-painted billboards of Fernando Poe Jr. or Lito Lapid or some other action stars, used to dominate high traffic areas in Cubao, Quezon City and on C.M. Recto Avenue in Manila where movie houses were just around the block.

Installed on rooftops or sides of houses in exchange for movie passes, canvas movie billboards were an integral part of the cityscape. But these days, the LRT and the MRT have blocked the visibility of billboards on these houses, and rentals for space in premium locations like the Guadalupe bridge on Edsa and the junction of Edsa and South Super Highway cost as much as P300,000 a month for a two-year contract, with the first six months paid in advance.

The malls along Edsa have supposedly made it a policy to exhibit only digitally printed billboards so they can maintain a classy image. There are also big name movie stars and concert performers who insist on their faces being digitally printed on tarpaulin, which make for sharp images and a slick look. Besides, the digital process can erase imperfections on flawed faces.



UP-CLOSE, the smallest wrinkle on Fernando Poe Jr's face could be seen in this digitally-printed billboard of his movie "Pakners."



THE attraction of lead actresses are captured in the brush strokes of the artist in this hand-painted signage for "Bigay Hilig."

But Benjie Sagmit, manager of Sagmit Advertising does not entirely welcome the advent of digitally printed billboards.

"What will happen to the Filipino billboard painters, most of whom are self-taught? They are also artists," he said.

Sagmit's father, Eduardo, is one of the pioneers in outdoor movie advertising, and has been in the business since the '50s, and peaked in the '70s, the height of Philippine movies.

"We had 20 painters then. Every week, we would go to 80 theaters to change the marquees. This is aside from outdoor billboards on busy intersections. Today, we have eight painters and service 50 movie houses," said Sagmit.

The standies like Galaxy, Lyric and New Frontier are gone. The multiplexes in old Manila like Gotesco have closed their theaters from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sagmit has since diversified.

"We not only hand-paint billboards, we also offer package deals. For P8,000 a month, we paint, install and rent out space for a movie billboard," he said.

Instead of hiring contractual workers, Sagmit still employs his own painters who live in his premises and get free board, power and water.

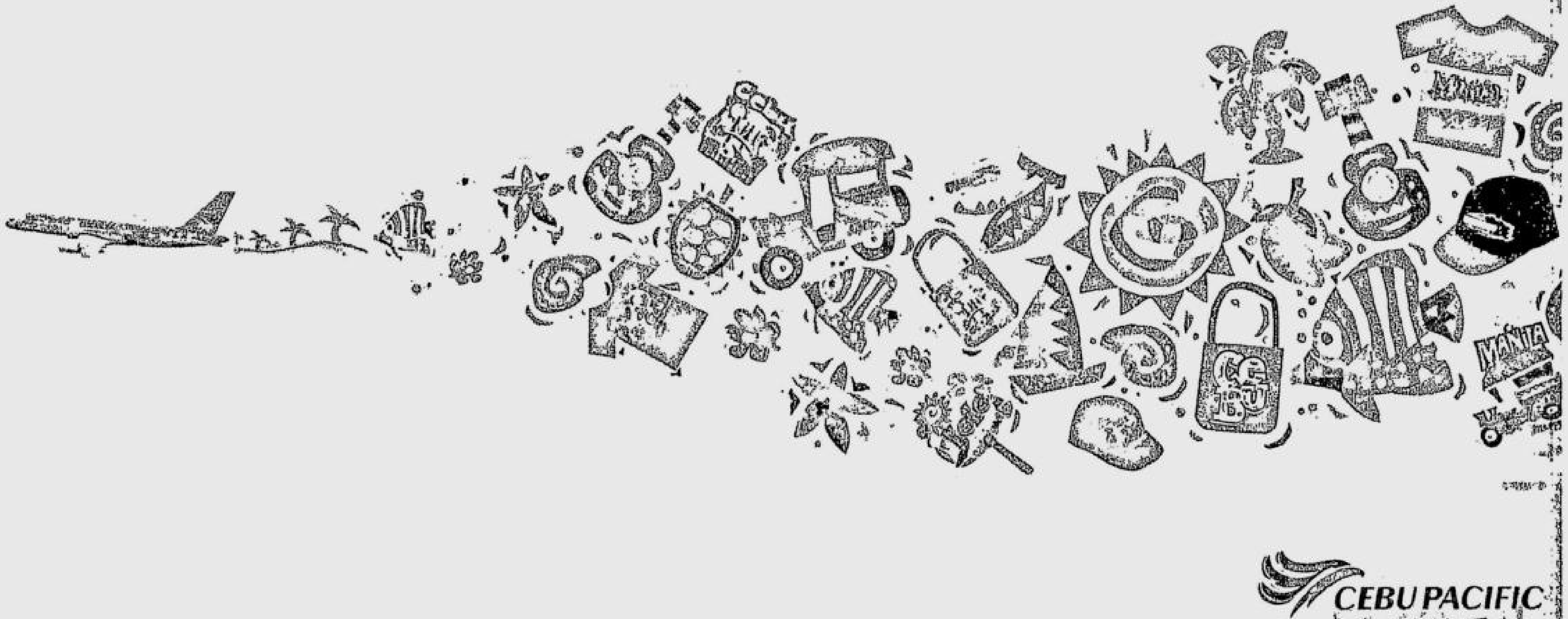
Painter Ernesto Yumul, 57, has been with Sagmit since the late '60s. He learned his craft at LVN Studios, and had sent four children to school just by painting billboards.

Through a correspondence course, he was able to finish a degree in Fine Arts. He knows all about color theory, composition and the human anatomy. One of his kids, Josefino, used to paint letters on billboards for extra money. He now has a degree in psychology, teaches psychology in FEU and photography on weekends in Bahay Nakpil, Manila.

His kids are all grownup, but Yumol does not want to stop working because he loves to paint. He used to dabble in photography and do portraits in Ermita, but not anymore.

"My eyes are not what they used to be. I prefer to paint billboards. My body feels free doing big, exaggerated strokes. Portraits require small, controlled strokes," he explained while painting the back of Cameron Diaz's head, the size of which was just about as big as his, on the 22-by-40-foot ad of "Char-

HAND-PAINTED/A21



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- The in flight games are in question and answer format and are facilitated by the cabin crew.
- To join the in flight games, passengers just have to raise their hands.
- If the passenger answers the question correctly, he wins a prize. If not, another passenger will be called until the question is answered correctly.
- There will be 3 winners per flight.

Per DTI-Region VII Permit No. 056, Series of 2003

SUERTRES 7 2 6
(In exact order)

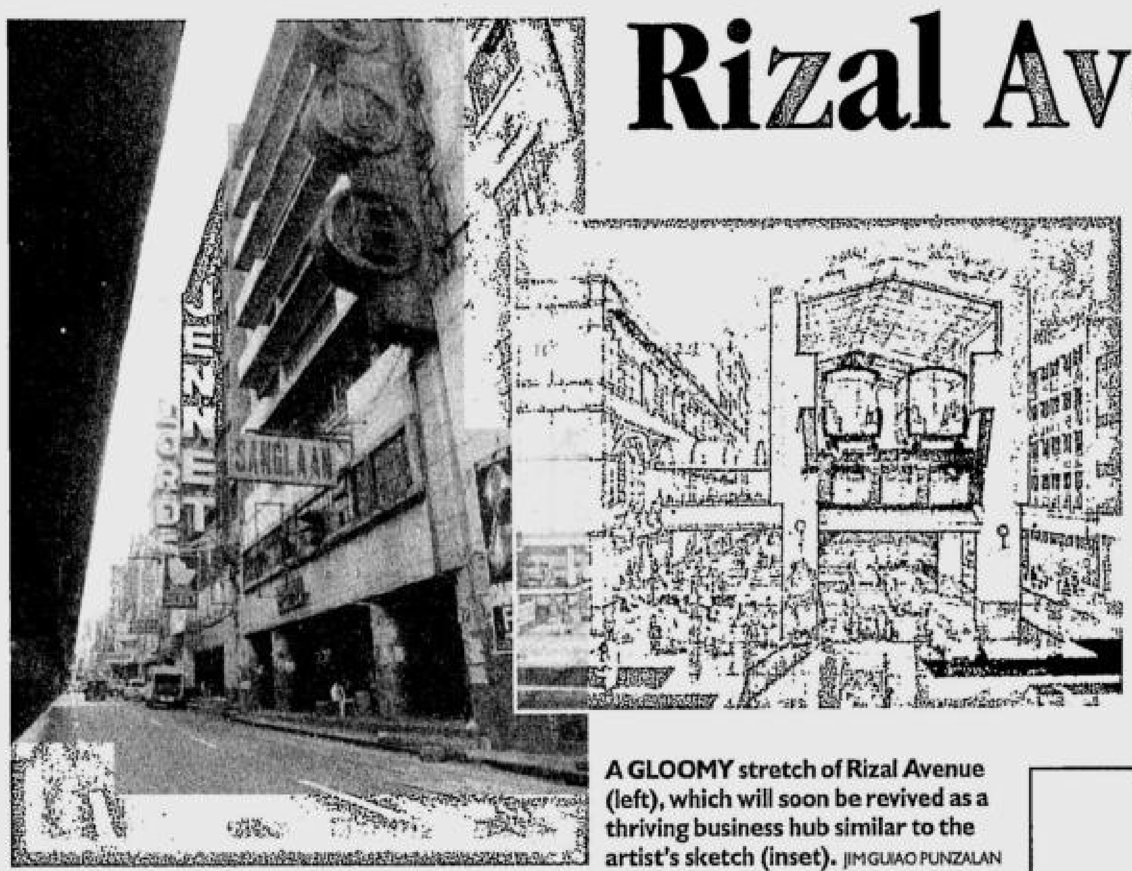
SUPERLOTTO 6/49
12 16 20 27 35 37

METRO

E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

Rizal Avenue revival? Yes!



A GLOOMY stretch of Rizal Avenue (left), which will soon be revived as a thriving business hub similar to the artist's sketch (inset). JIMGUIAO PUNZALAN

By Margaux Ortiz

AVENIDA—once the premier shopping district of Manila—may soon regain lost pride, thanks to the "Buhayin ang Maynila" project of Mayor Lito Atienza Jr.

According to Atienza, Avenida will undergo "pedestrianization," which means closing it to vehicular traffic and turning it into a haven for shoppers and people on a stroll.

The project, Atienza said, will be similar to what Manila did to Carriedo.

He explained that making downtown Manila pedestrian-friendly was one of the priority projects of his administration.

As part of Avenida's development, its streets will be raised to the level of the sidewalk. The flower boxes in the middle of the avenue will be removed to give pedestrians more room to walk about.

The avenue will also be lit up with more street lamps to deter criminals from victimizing shoppers.

"We will re-layout the place and put alfresco coffee shops to make Avenida more appealing," Atienza said.

However, the mayor said, some

RIZAL/ A21

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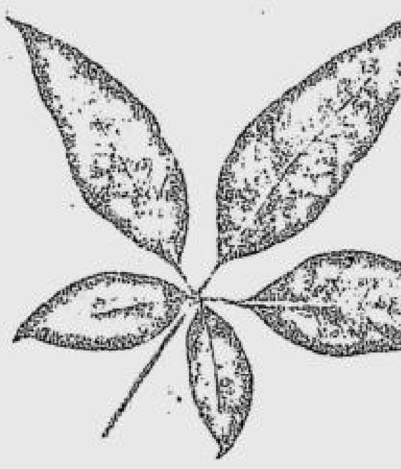

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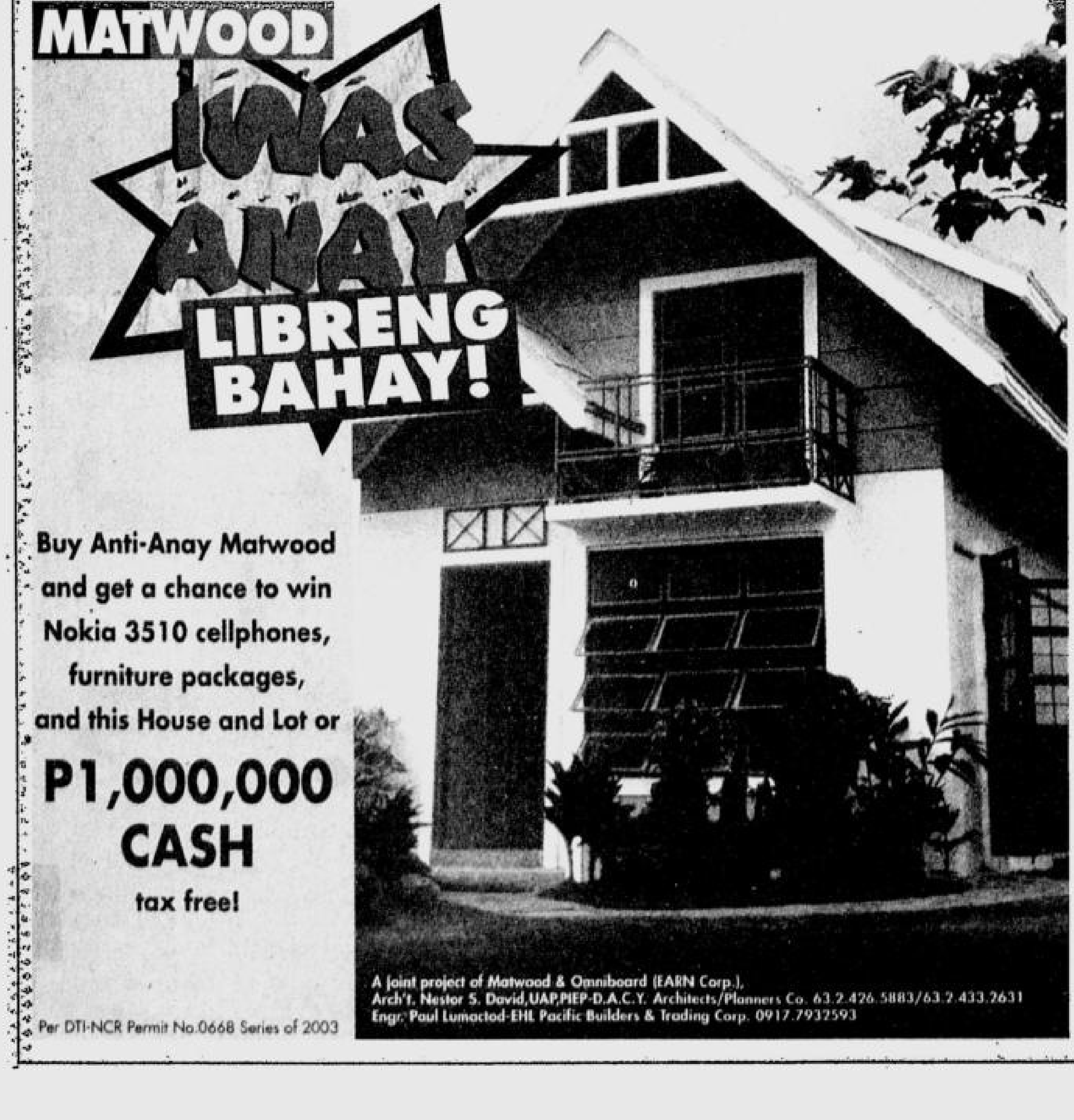

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No.0668 Series of 2003

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Mechanics:

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3. The Raffle Promo will run from 1 March 2003 to 30 June 2003, nationwide. There will be three (3) monthly draws and one (1) grand draw. Period covered, deadline of entries (until store's closing hours) submission and draw dates are as follows:

Period Covered	Deadline of Submission of Entries	Raffle Draw Dates
1st Monthly Draw: Mar. -31	31 March	14 Apr. 2003, 3pm
2nd Monthly Draw: Apr. 1–30	30 April	14 May 2003, 3pm
3rd Monthly Draw: May 1–31	31 May	13 June 2003, 3pm
Grand Draw: Mar. 1–June 30	30 June	14 July 2003, 3pm

Prizes are as follows:
Monthly Draws
  a. Php 30,000 worth Living Room Showcase (1 each for Luzon and Vismin)
     Luxuriant Sofa Set (3-seater, 2-seater, 1-seater), Divan, Center Table, TV Rack
  b. Nokia 3510 (5 units each for Luzon and Vismin)
Grand Draw
  Major Prize:
  a. 1 fully-finished Timber-framed House and Lot package* in Calamba, Laguna or Php 1,000,000.00 cash (*transfer fees will be shouldered by the winner)
  Minor Prizes:
  a. Php 30,000 worth Living Room Showcase (1 each for Luzon and Vismin)
     Luxuriant Sofa Set (3-seater, 2-seater, 1-seater), Divan, Center table, TV Rack
  b. Nokia 3510 (5 units each for Luzon and Vismin)
4. All raffle prizes are nontransferable,tax-free and non convertible to cash.
5. A participant can win only once in each draw. If a name is drawn more than once, he/she gets the bigger prize.
6. Monthly draws for both Luzon and Vismin will be held separately and simultaneously, with the same number of winners. Non-winning raffle entries for the month still have a chance to qualify for all the succeeding draws.
7 For Luzon entries, monthly draws will be held at the MATIMCO, INC. SALES OFFICE, 62 Old Samson Rd, Balintawak, QC at 3:00 pm. For VisMin entries, monthly draws will be held at the MATIMCO INC. HEAD OFFICE, Hi-way Estancia, Mandaue City, Cebu at 3:00 pm. The winning raffle stubs will be drawn using tambiolos of Matimco in the presence of a DTI representative.
8. The Grand Raffle draw for Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will be held at the MATIMCO INC. SALES OFFICE, 62 Old Samson Rd, Balintawak, Q.C. on July 14, 2003 at 3PM, in the presence of a DTI representative.
9. Winners shall be notified through registered mail.
10. Prizes can be claimed within 60 days from notification. Prizes will be forfeited after claim period has lapsed w/ prior DTI approval. To claim the prize, just present any valid ID's, the registered mail, and the claim stub to the following Matimco, Inc. Sales Offices:
   *For Luzon Winners: #62 Old Samson Road, Balintawak, QC
   *For Visayas and Mindanao Winners: Hi-way Estancia, Mandaue City, Cebu
11. Employees of Matimco Inc., participating Hardware Stores and the Advertising Agency including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the raffle promo.

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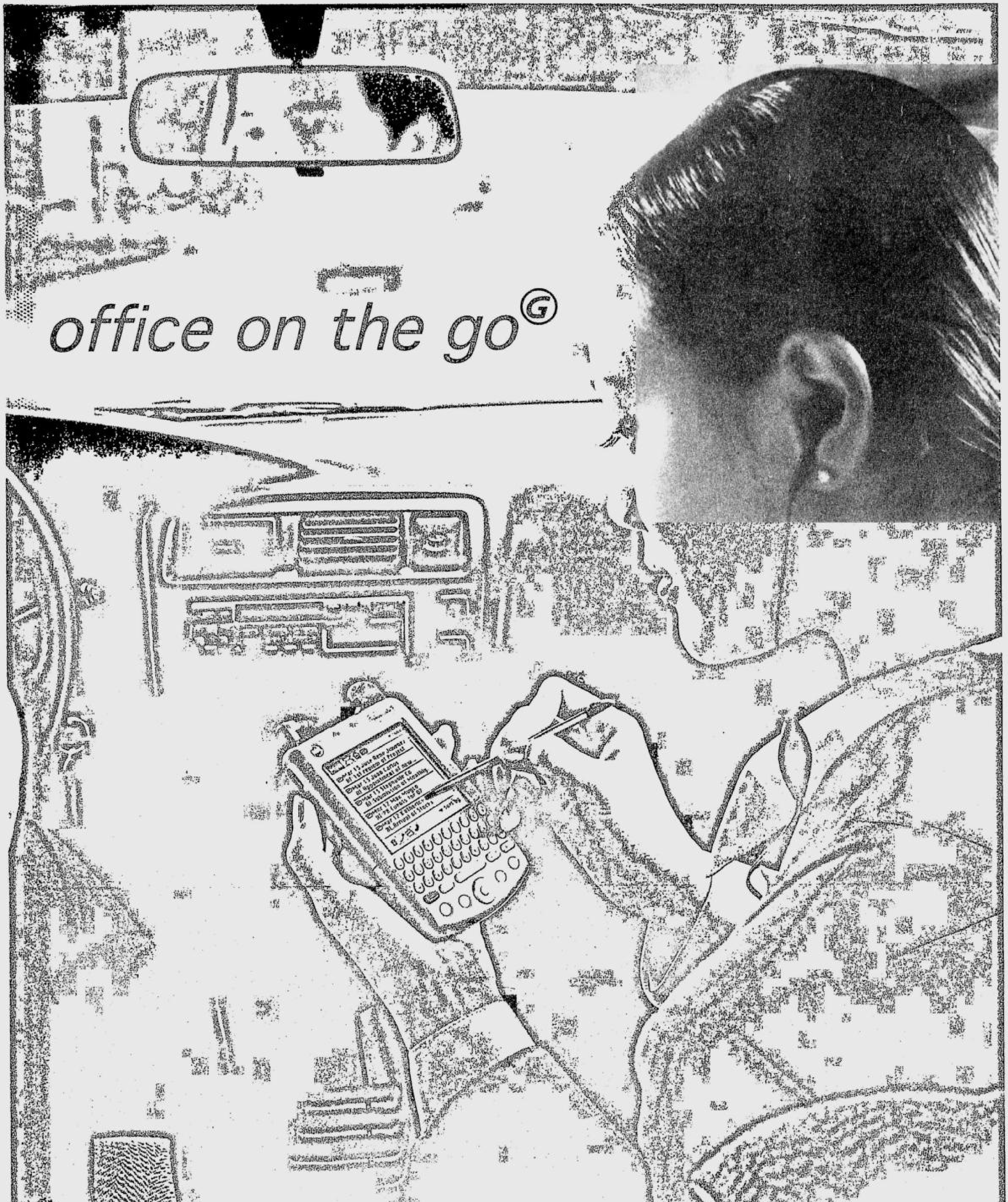

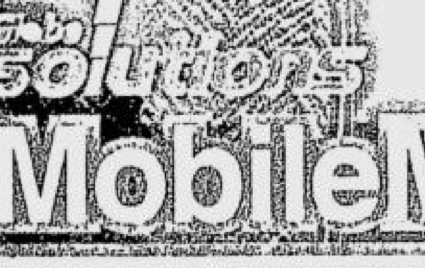

Mar 13 Jose Rene Jimenez
RE:1st review of Project
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RE:Submission of Monthly...
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Asian trackfest gets going today

By Roy Luarca

LERMA Bulauitan-Gabito and Maristella Torres get another chance to break Kazakhstan's Yelena Kochsheyeva's domination of the women's long jump in the final leg of the Asian Grand Prix today at the Rizal Memorial track oval.

Humbled by the Kazakh in the past three stops, the Filipinas hope to turn things around and secure berths to the Philippine team bound for the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games in December.

To beat Kochsheyeva, however, they need to surpass their personal bests.

Gabito, of Penaranda, Cagayan, cleared 6.43 meters in a silver-medal effort in the 2001 Kuala Lumpur SEAG while Torres, of San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, registered 6.40m in another silver medal effort in the 2002 Asian Championships in Sri Lanka.

Kochsheyeva's winning jump in last year's Busan Asian Games is 6.63m.

"The local fans who will cheer Torres and Gabito could give the two the much-needed adrenalin and inspiration to finally topple Kochsheyeva," said Go Teng Kok, president of the organizing Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association. "Just like the other national athletes, they need to do well here."

Carrying the country's colors in the kick-off event—the men's 110m hurdles—are Alonzo Jardin, Gilber Gujar, Reynaldo Padilla, Orlando Male and Robert Fresnido.

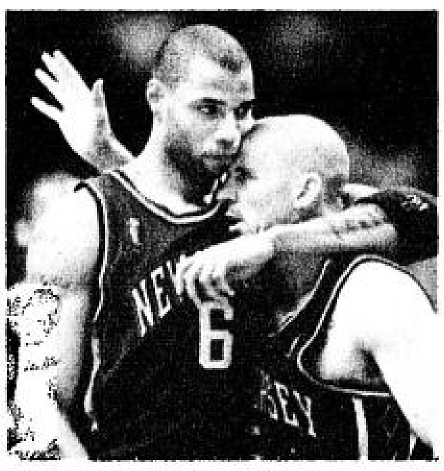
A brief opening ceremony, to be graced by International Amateur Athletic Federation vice president Helmut Digel of Germany and Asian Athletics Association secretary general Maurice Nicholas of Singapore, will be held at 2 p.m.

Also expected to attend are Rep. Monico Puentevella, chair of the House committee on youth and sports and president of the weightlifting association, Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain and Philippine Olympic Committee head Celso Dayrit.

Apart from Gabito and Torres, Go expects creditable performances from 2001 SEAG champion Ernie Candelario (400m), Joebert Delicano (long jump), Dandy Gallenero (javelin) and Milo National Open sprint king Ralph Waldy Soguilon.

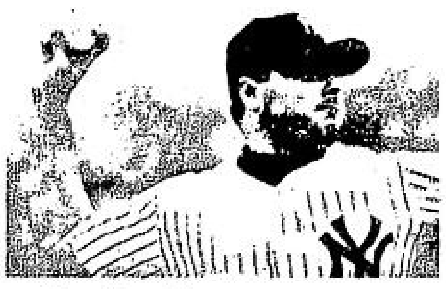
Most notable among the foreign participants is Sri Lanka's Susanthika Jayasinghe, Asian Games sprint queen and 200m Olympic silver medalist. Jayasinghe, who set a record 11.15 seconds for the century dash in Busan, will be challenged by Uzbekistan's Perepelova Lyubov, Thailand's Klomdee Orranut, India's Saha Sarawati, Kazakhstan's Kovyrea and two locals.

WHAT'S INSIDE



- Nets have high hopes in Game 3 /A28

- Funny Cide's Triple Crown dream is over /A32
- Mighty Ducks forge Game 7 /A29



- Strike three for Roger Clemens /A30

- David Beckham may go to Italy /A28
- Henin-Hardenne wins French Open for everybody /A30

SPORTS TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA Finals - Spurs vs Nets, Game 3; 8:30 a.m.; IBC 13 (r - 7 p.m.) and Solar Sports (r - 9 p.m.) - The scene shifts to the Continental Airlines Arena as New Jersey hopes to take advantage of its home court against San Antonio.

1996 NBA Season Review; 5 p.m. (r); ESPN - Try to bring back memories as one the NBA's most memorable seasons is recalled in this special program.

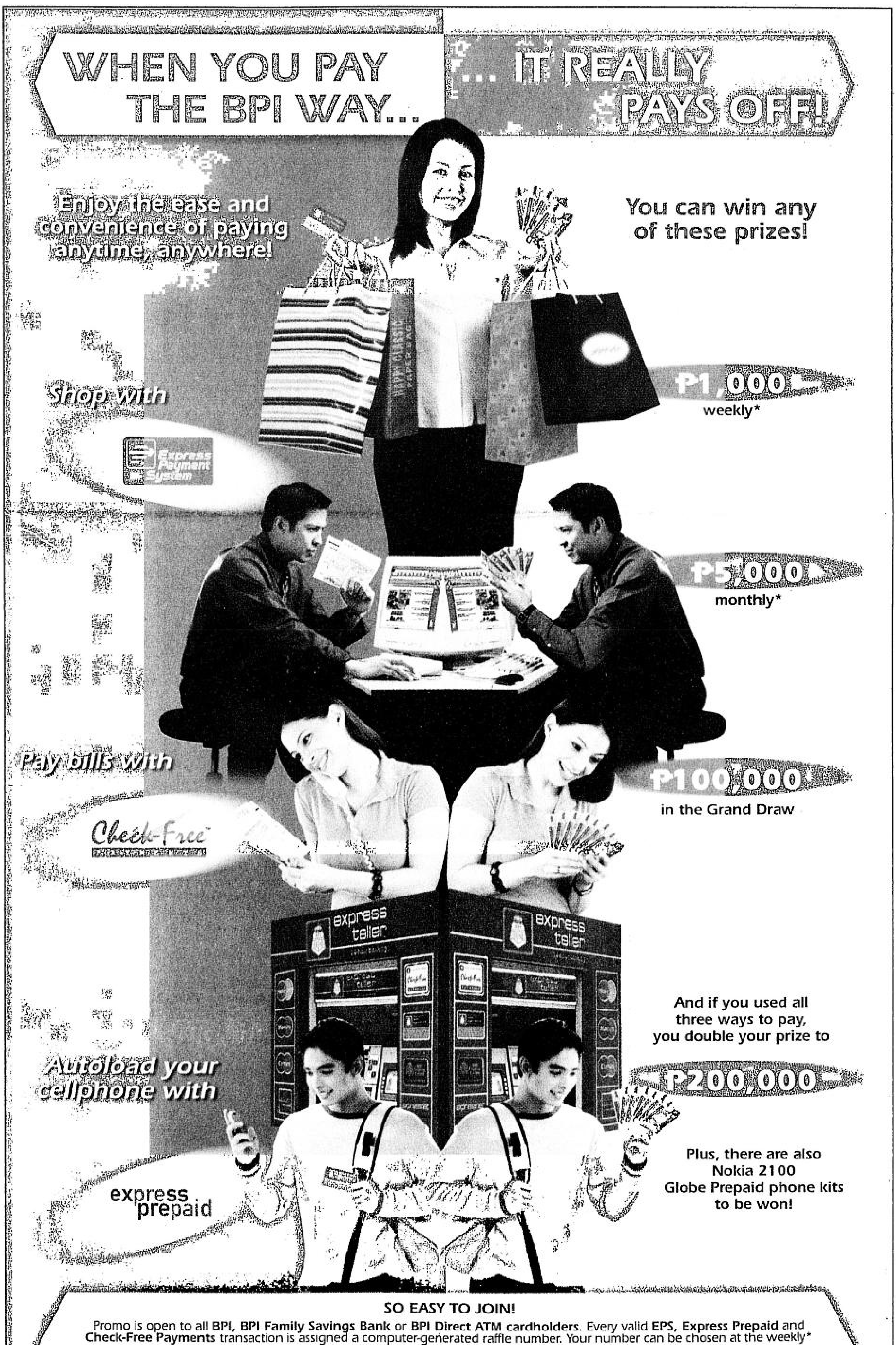
NBA Jam; 6:30 a.m.; IBC 13 - Get your dose of exciting NBA action from this half - hour show.

GOLF: This is the PGA Tour; 12 noon (r); Star Sports - Learn more about the comings and goings in the PGA.

PGA FBR Capital Open; 1 p.m. and 9 p.m. (r); Star Sports - Find out who cashes in the big check as the final 18 holes are played out from Potomac, Maryland.

TENNIS: Wimbledon - Double the Fun; 8 p.m.; Star Sports - The most prestigious grass court tournament is just around the corner and get a look back at some memorable moments from the past.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.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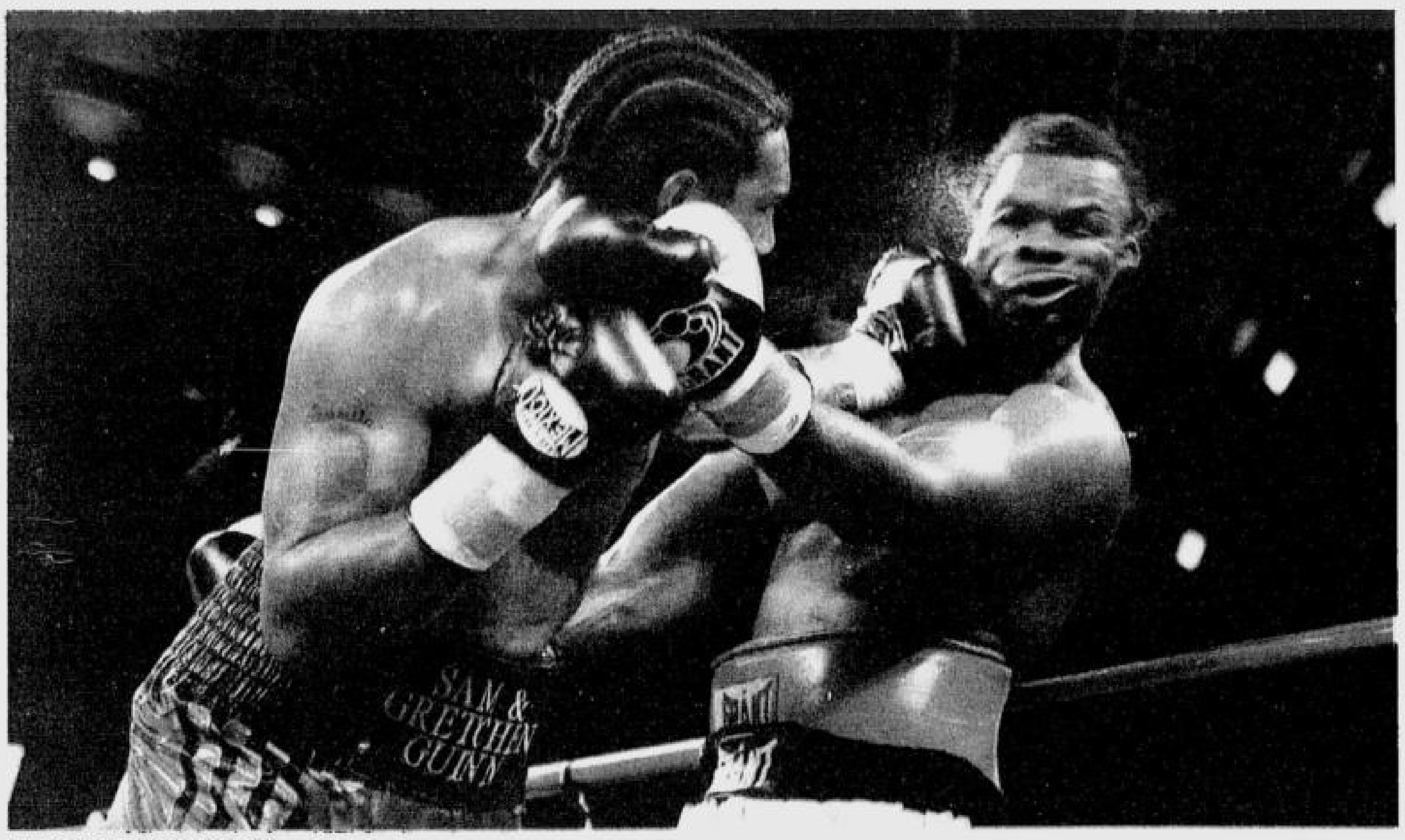

KNOCKOUT PUNCH
Dominick Guinn (left) knocks out Michael Grant with a left hook in the seventh round of their heavyweight bout at Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City, New Jersey on Saturday night. AFP

Gatti whips Ward in rubber match

ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey—Junior welterweight Arturo Gatti pounded out another thrilling 10-round decision over Micky Ward, closing the book on a fight trilogy that breathed new life into both men's careers.

Gatti, who split a pair of fights with Ward last year, outpunched and outmaneuvered the slower, 37-year-old Ward on Saturday night, overcoming a broken hand and a knockdown to win the rubber match in a unanimous decision.

Ward, a hard-hitting former club fighter with the resiliency of a champion, never succumbed despite a bloody nose, two cuts on his face and a series of exchanges in which he looked like he was about to collapse.

Peppered by jabs he was too slow to block, Ward was bleeding and in trouble by the end of the third round.

But Gatti (36-6) broke his right hand on an uppercut to the hip in that round, and he fought nearly one-handed for several rounds afterward.

In the fourth, Ward (38-13) engineered a stunning turnaround, connecting with two lefts and a right to the head that stopped Gatti in his tracks. Ward then hit him with five straight left uppercuts to the body, bringing the roaring crowd of 12,643 in Boardwalk Hall to its feet.

In the sixth, Gatti, 31, of Jersey City, New Jersey, dominated the round but got caught with an overhand right to the top of the head a second before the bell rang and went down.

But he recovered again and was never in trouble after that. Not that Ward gave up.

The two went after each other the rest of the way, although Ward hit nothing but air with his lunging left hooks and couldn't block Gatti. In the seventh, Gatti landed 61 of 101 power punches, according to punch statistics kept at ringside.

Ward, who had promised to retire after the fight, made good on the vow afterward, saying he was through with boxing.

"He hit me with some shots early on that took the steam out of me," said Ward, of Lowell, Massachusetts.

Both fighters were taken to Atlantic City Medical Center for treatment. Ward complained of a right hand injury and a ringside physician who examined him after the fight said he thought it was broken.

Judges George Hill and Joe Pasquale scored it 96-93 and Luis Rivera had it 97-92. Gatti won on the AP's card 96-93.

"I knew that he was coming to fight," said Gatti, who hugged Ward and shared a bottle of water with him in the ring after the decision was announced. *AP*

HK special athletes can go to Ireland

HONG KONG—Hong Kong has finally been cleared to compete in this month's Special Olympics Summer Games in Dublin after Irish authorities changed an earlier decision to ban the SARS-hit city, an official said Sunday.

Following two days of intense lobbying in Dublin by Cheung Doi-ching, chief representative in the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels, the Irish government announced that Hong Kong could participate.

A statement by the Irish government following the talks said the "Hong Kong officials presented a proposal which took into consideration the recommendations of the Irish Expert Group to enable the Hong Kong Special Olympics delegation to attend the Games." The Sunday Morning Post said a condition was attached to the agreement which required Hong Kong delegates to go to Macau for 10 days–the recommended incubation period for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)–before flying to Dublin, where the Games are scheduled to begin on June 21. *AFP*

POC-PSC rift hurting sports

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

THE RIFT between the Philippine Olympic Committee and the Philippine Sports Commission over the use of catch phrases and trademarks relating to the Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam this December only shows that sports in this country is indeed in a sorry state because sports officials are always locked in conflict.

Why can't we all work together? Aren't we Filipinos before we're anything else? For many, the POC -PSC rift is not only hurting sports, it is also leaving athletes demoralized and their training for the SEA Games hampered. Worse, once our feuding sports leaders lose the respect of the athletes and the trust of the few remaining sponsors, Philippine sports will die and the Filipino youth will eventually suffer.

In the latest POC-PSC row, specifically over the exclusive use of logos of two rival sponsors (Accel for the POC and Adidas for the PSC) and the catch phrase Team Philippines for the delegation to the SEA Games, I am inclined to believe that the POC is correct in its claim because it is mandated by the International Olympic Committee to protect logos, trademarks and phrases which are awarded to corporate sponsors of international competitions like the Olympics, Asian and SEA Games.

In the legal aspect of sponsorship and the protection of Olympic properties, the IOC says, "it is essential that National Olympic Committees (the POC in this case) take all steps necessary to protect against the use of the Olympic properties (i.e. Olympic emblems and Olympic designations) by unauthorized third parties. Besides, it is the POC, not the PSC, which ultimately selects the national team. However, a national sports federation may grant to its sponsors a designation such as "Official Sponsor of the National Sports Federation's National Team" (without using the word "Olympic").

The IOC also says an NOC should try to coordinate its own sponsorship program with those of its national sports federations. Unfortunately, this is not happening here. POC secretary general Romeo Ribaño admitted to the INQUIRER recently that there hasn't been a dialogue between the POC and the PSC regarding SEAG issues. "The problem is we don't talk although we are in the same building." Isn't this odd? The POC and the PSC should liaise in order to keep conflicts to a minimum.

According to Olympic Message, a publication of the IOC, the Olympic Charter gives broad powers to the NOCs to select the clothing and equipment worn and used by team members during the period of the games, but no advertising whatsoever is allowed on clothing or equipment during the games. However, trademark identification of the manufacturer of the clothing or equipment may appear on these items provided that such identification shall not be marked conspicuously for advertising purposes. NOCs may not use or allow the use of their Olympic properties to advertise alcohol or tobacco products.

***

OLYMPIC PROPERTIES. The Olympic symbol, which features the five interlocking Olympic rings, is the property of the International Olympic Committee. Only the IOC can use or authorize the use of the Olympic symbol. However, the Olympic symbol may be used on postage stamps issued by competent national postal authorities in collaboration with the IOC and their respective National Olympic Committees. The Olympic motto, "Citius, Altius, Fortius" (Swifter, Higher, Stronger), belongs to the IOC and should not be used by NOCs for any commercial purpose. Each NOC and Organizing Committee of an Olympic Games (OCOG) may have an Olympic emblem, an integrated design associating the Olympic symbol with another distinctive element. But the design of such Olympic emblem must be submitted to the IOC for approval.

SPORTSWATCH

66th UAAP begins July 12

THE 66th University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP) unwraps July 12 with host school Ateneo hoping to retain the men's basketball crown. Jose Capistrano Jr. formally received the reins as UAAP president from Sonny Paguia of National University in simple ceremonies two weeks ago. Emphasis on the 13 other sports calendared annually in the UAAP remains a priority for Ateneo, which has prepared a sizzling one-hour opening ceremony party beginning at 1 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum. Matches pitting University of the Philippines against National University at 2 p.m., last year's losing finalist De La Salle and UST at 6 usher in UAAP hostilities. Ateneo only get to see action July 13 against University of the East.

Ebuen advances in table tennis

NATIONAL champion Ernesto Ebuen got a scare from G.Y. Canonero before pulling off an 11-7, 10-12, 7-11, 11-2, 11-7 victory yesterday in the PCSO-1st President Cup National Age-Group Table Tennis Championships at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium. Also advancing were Jonard Baldonado, Noel Gonzales, Mario Santos, Joseph Cruz, Michael Dalumpines and Rogel Flores. Baldonado, perennial 40-under winner, thrashed Philip Belderol, 11-3, 11-1, 11-6, in the open category; Gonzales whipped Mark Jimenez, 11-8, 11-9, 11-4; Santos stopped Michael Motel, 13-11, 11-6, 7-11, 11-2; Cruz squeaked past Onilesan Tauro, 8-11, 11-6, 11-8, 8-11, 11-6; Dalumpines stunned Rebo Cruz, 11-5, 10-12, 11-8, 11-9; and Flores came back from two sets down to oust Angelo Marcelino, 7-11, 8-11, 11-7, 11-4, 11-5. Favorite Sendrina Balatbat, Ayra Malabayabas, Arlene Borja, Susan Tayag, Annabel Commendador and former national champion Crisanta Abas all cruised to the quarterfinals of the distaff side. Richard Gonzales trounced Allan Reyes, 11-8, 11-8, in the special "liha" event.

Valdez wrests men's singles lead

VALDEZ

PAULO Valdez emerged the new men's singles leader Saturday in the 32nd Boysen-PBC International Open Bowling Championship at the Green Valley Center in Pasig. Valdez, winner of the initial leg of the Asian Bowling Tour held in Malaysia early this year, scored 981 to put an end to RP coach Purvis Granger's stint at the top of the meet's premier division for men. Granger, also dislodged from the top of the men's all events by Hong Kong's Wu Siu Hong two days ago, fell to second place with a 976 total. Bunched at third are Benito Dytoc, Biboy Rivera and Tyrone Ongpauco, all with aggregate scores of 965. But Valdez's partnership with CJ Suarez and Biboy Rivera (1261) still trails the trio of Edgar Barroga, Cyrus Choong and Hong (1312) in the team event. Liza del Rosario (singles, doubles, team and all events) as well as Johnson Cheng and Frederick Ong (men's doubles) kept the lead in their respective categories. The foreign bets, however, are beginning to make their move going into the final stretch of the two-week, Asian ranking meet which also serves as qualifying to the third leg of the ABT to be held at the Pearl Plaza Center in Parañaque this weekend.

De los Reyes rules 5-mile classic

REYNALDO de los Reyes topped the third staging of the Greenhills Running Club 5-Mile Classic yesterday, clocking 24:08 in the men's division. UP-Diliman varsity trackster Rio dela Cruz, 22, clocked 24:39 to place second. De los Reyes received P3,000 and Dela Cruz P2,000. De los Reyes also received a 6- month free trial certificate from Fitness First. Alquin Bolivar clocked 24:51 to take third place in the event sponsored by Zesto and supported by Procter and gambel, Ortigas and Co., Wyeth Stuaco, Milo, Fitness First, Optique Prima and Philflex Wires and Cables. In the women's division, actress namesake Gloria Diaz, a native of Roxas City, made it two in a row by posting a start-to-finish victory. She negotiated the five mile distance in 27:57, earning P3000 and a 6-month free trial certificate from Fitness First. Liza Yambao, a member of UST's varsity track team, clocked 29:21 to place second and receive P2,000. Navy woman Hazel Madamba finished third in 29:50. Close to 800 runners competed in the event organized by the Greenhills Running Club headed by Dr. jerry Jarin with Mile marathon national race organizer Rudy Biscocho as race director.

So, Fronda age-group champions

WESLEY So and Jan Jodilyn Fronda topped their respective divisions in this year's Philippine Age-Group Chess Championship at the SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. The No. 2 ranked So beat No. 17 Danilo Engay Jr. in 18 moves of a Pirc duel to score 6.5 points and rule the boys' 10 and under division. Fronda, also seeded 2nd, beat 12th seed Brena Mae Membre in 51 moves of a Slav game to top the girls' 10 and under with 6 points. The other champions were Nelson Mariano III (boys under 14), Karl Victor Ochoa (boys under 12), Cindy Atayde (girls under 14) and Cheyser Crystal Mendoza (girls under 12). They may represent the country in the World Youth Championships in Greece late this year.

RP chess team gets computers

THE PHILIPPINE chess team got a big boost following the donation of five lap top computers by the Philippine Sports Commission recently. PSC chair Eric Buhain turned over the computers requested by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines Saturdayat the SM Megamall. The computers will be used for the training of the RP chess team competing in the Southeast Asian Games in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam in December. "Maraming salamat po kay PSC chair Eric Buhain, malaki ang maitutulong sa amin ng limang laptop computer para sa paghahanda sa SEA Games at sa Asian Zonal," said the 1999 World Chess Championships Las Vegas, Nevada quaifier Rogelio "Joey" Antonio. Antonio skipped the 2003 Doha, Qatar Asian Continental Chess Championships because he did not have a laptop computer.

Cainta 5-cock tourney on today

A TOTAL pot of P1.3 million will be at stake when the Cainta Fair Center Coliseum stages the Laban Laban 5-cock derby starting at 4 p.m. today. The derby will be hosted by DY Piyeza Group. Entry fee is P5,500 and minimum bet is P3,300. Sponsors are Sagupaan Hammer Dewormer and Sagupaan Mite Free Shampoo. For details, call 655-3344 and 2402952

Firefly Thunderbird derby favorite

FIREFLY Thunderbird of two-time Cocker of the Year Jun Santiago, looms as top favorite in the National Cockers Association 7-cock derby slated today and Wednesday at the Araneta Coliseum. The derby will be hosted by Fil-Americans Rene Medina and Ric de Guzman from San Francisco, California and the NCA. Firefly Thunderbird, the Encounter at the Big Dome champion, is also tipped to make its presence felt in the World Slasher 9-Cock Derby hosted by Nene Araneta, Ito Ynares and Santiago on June 16, 18 and 20.

Athletic officials Forum guests

DR. Helmut Diegel of Germany, vice president of the International Amateur Athletic Federation, and Maurice Nicholas of Singapore, secretary general of the Asian Athletic Association, have been invited to grace tomorrow's session of the PSA Forum at the Manila Pavilion. They are expected to talk about the state of Philippine and Asian athletics and the fourth and final leg of the Asian Grand Prix, which will be held today.

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PBA drug check needs a serious check

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

LOOKING at the guy, it's hard to say if Noli Eala ever goes fishing.

You see, unlike Ernest Hemingway's unsinkable hero in the Old Man and the Sea, Eala did not have to go without a single catch for 84 lonely days.

One random check after a game in Cebu, this was during Eala's first days as PBA Commissioner, and, voila, he landed a big one.

Batang Red Bull star guard Jimwell Torion readily tested positive for banned drugs, shabu to be exact.

Please take note that Eala scored and landed a significant catch while relying only on random drug testing.

***

Well, only Eala can tell when he suddenly and irrevocably decided to chose to order an all-out drug check on all active PBA players.

Maybe the need for a mandatory drug test in the PBA dawned on the youthful PBA Commissioner while he was driving back home one night.

Or maybe early one morning, while he was enjoying an undisturbed, kingly perch inside the bathroom.

But definitely not one afternoon, a Sunday, when we caught him on the phone while he was returning from a family affair in Batangas.

***

No, no, there was no need for a mandatory drug check, Eala told me over his cellphone, after I wondered if subjecting all PBA players to a mandatory drug test was not (yet) necessary.

I offered that suggestion after another player, Alex Crisano, flunked a drug test a few days after Torion was slapped an indefinite suspension for drug use.

Why go mandatory, asked Eala, when the random checking system was serving its purpose?

He said there would be no mandatory drug check in the PBA.

I calmly took his word.

***

Unlike that luckless but unbreakable Hemingway hero, Eala had no reason to feel frustrated.

He felt successful and happy enough with what he had at hand.

Then, some two or three days later, Eala suddenly announced the PBA would now conduct an all-out, mandatory team-by-team drug check involving players, coaches, team hands and, yes, even himself.

***

Of course, the PBA was alarmed. It suddenly found the need to send a strong message it's a responsible, professional agency with a sound, honest program for a drug-free league.

Indeed, a few more days and another player, Norman Gonzales of Talk N Text also flunked the PBA drug test.

Then, in a more jarring twist, the PBA announced six more players, headed by Jun Limpot of Brgy. Ginebra and Davonn Harp of Red Bull, had tested positive for drugs.

Now, please take note that, except for Torion, the eight other PBA cagers who next flunked the drug test, had contested the damaging laboratory findings on their urine specimen.

They claimed they had tested positive mainly due to food supplements or medication previously taken.

In fact, both Harp and Limpot claimed they next tested negative after they had themselves checked in prestigious hospitals.

***

Now, these developments, naturally, led authorities and fans to ask whether it was wise of the PBA to have gone public on their findings before confronting the players for clarification.

As it would turn out, and based on subsequent events, the players found positive also had something to lean on in professing their innocence.

Yes, the way the drug scandal has shaped up, it's the PBA that now has to do some clarifying.

Of course, the PBA would never allow itself to be suspected of coddling drug users.

This was the reason behind the sudden, frantic shift from random to mandatory drug testing in the league.

But, with the unhappy turn of events, one thing has become clear: the PBA drug testing program itself needs a serious check.

UM, Perpetual dispute Padilla Cup title today

UNIVERSITY of Manila and University of Perpetual Help-Rizal cruised past their semifinal rivals yesterday to forge a title showdown for the 3rd Ambrosio Padilla Cup title today.

Game time is 3 p.m. at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

The UM Hawks dumped the San Beda Red Lions, 105-82, while the UPHR Altas trounced the University of Sto. Tomas Tigers, 76-68.

Lyceum and Adamson dispute the women's championship at 1:30 p.m., following the San Beda-Ateneo final in the junior division.

Also on tap are the battle for third place between the PCU Baby Dolphins and the Letran Squires at 9 a.m. and the San Beda-UST tussle for third in the seniors division.

The Hawks, powered by Ryan Regalado's nine three-pointers, surged to a 55-39 halftime lead and were never challenged by the Red Lions. Regalado finished with a game-high 36 points.

The Altas, on the other hand, drew 21 points from Kiel Misa and 20 from speedy pointguard Nonoy Javier to beat the Tigers.

The event honoring the Basketball Association of the Philippines' founding president is being supported by Cebuana Lhuillier, Burlington Socks, Healthy Options, Accel, Absolute Mineral Water and Molten.

Invited to attend today's awarding ceremony are BAP president Tiny Literal and Health Undersecretary Alex Padilla, grandson of the late Ambassador Padilla.

The National Basketball League will donate trophies to the winners through its chief executive officer Tito Palma.

Scores:

UM 105—Regalado 36, Matias 22, Gomez 17, Aquino 14, Espeno 6, Mejos 5, Labitag 2, Castillo 2, Litonjua 1.

SAN BEDA 82—Bugao 18, Cordero 15, Angeles 12, Ong 11, Hudencial 10, Paterno 8, Weber 5, Casino 2, Apepe 1.

Halftime: 55-39

UPHR 76—Misa 21, Javier 20, Vuenco 15, Bernzon 9, Vladimer 7, Balboa 4.

UST 68—Vizcarra 18, De Guzman 17, Cortez 12, Evangelista 4, Dizon 3, Espiritu 3, Raterta 2, Villamin 2, Mansala 2, Hubalde 2, Del Rosario 1, Manching 1, Asay 1.

Halftime: 46-33.

Gary paces MVP race; Ranidel 6th

MONTANA'S Gary David still leads the pack, but the gap is narrowing in the PBL Most Valuable Player derby.

Chasing David, who posted 569 statistical points, are Hapee Toothpaste stalwarts Allan Salangsang, Peter June Simon and Rich Alvarez and Jon Dan Salvador, also of Montana.

The 6-foot-5 Salangsang moved up to second with 542 statistical points, overtaking Simon (537). Alvarez, former MVP of the University Athletic Association of the Philippines, climbed to fourth with 503, towing Salvador (493). Former leader Ranidel de Ocampo of John-O slid to sixth with 488 points and may have to content himself with making the Mythical Team.

Completing the top 10 are Jason Misolas (485), Dennis Miranda (472) and Francis Gerard Jones (462), all of Viva Mineral Water; and Montana's Topex Robinson (460).

The PBL MVP will be known at 2 p.m. tomorrow in the Achievement Awards set at the Pasig Sports Center.

Other awards up for grabs are the Top Newcomer, Sportsmanship and the Most Improved Player plums.

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Nets have high hopes as Finals head home

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey—The NBA finals shift to the Meadowlands Sunday with the New Jersey Nets hoping for the same success their NHL room mates have had at Continental Airlines Arena—three wins at home.

After splitting the first two games of the best-of-seven series in San Antonio, the Nets can clinch their first championship title with a sweep of the Spurs in their three-game homestand.

Since the NBA switched to the 2-3-2 format, no team has ever swept the middle three games of a championship series but "The Swamp," where the Nets (6-1) have lost just once this postseason, has been an inhospitable place for visitors.

The New Jersey Devils, who share locker space with the Nets at the Meadowlands, are also well aware there is no place like home.

With the Stanley Cup finals level at 3-3, the Devils will face the Anaheim Mighty Ducks in a Game Seven decider at the Continental Airlines Arena Monday, all three of New Jersey's wins in the series having come on home ice.

"We haven't accomplished anything but now we have home court advantage," Nets coach Byron Scott told reporters after Friday's 87-85 victory over the Spurs.

"The object is to win a championship. All we did today was tie it up and we took home court advantage." If the Nets and the Devils go on to claim the two championships, it would mark the first time teams from the same place have won NBA and NHL titles.

A maze of turnpikes and parking lots, the Meadowlands has baffled opposing teams this season.

The Nets arrived in the NBA finals riding a 10-game postseason winning streak, including a 4-0 sweep of the Detroit Pistons in the Eastern Conference finals.

That run came to a screeching halt in San Antonio when the the Spurs bulldozed past the Nets 101-89 in the series opener.

But New Jersey, behind a clutch 30-point effort from All-Star guard Jason Kidd, bounced back in Game Two to level the series.

If the Spurs are to avoid getting bogged down at "The Swamp," much will depend on Tim Duncan.

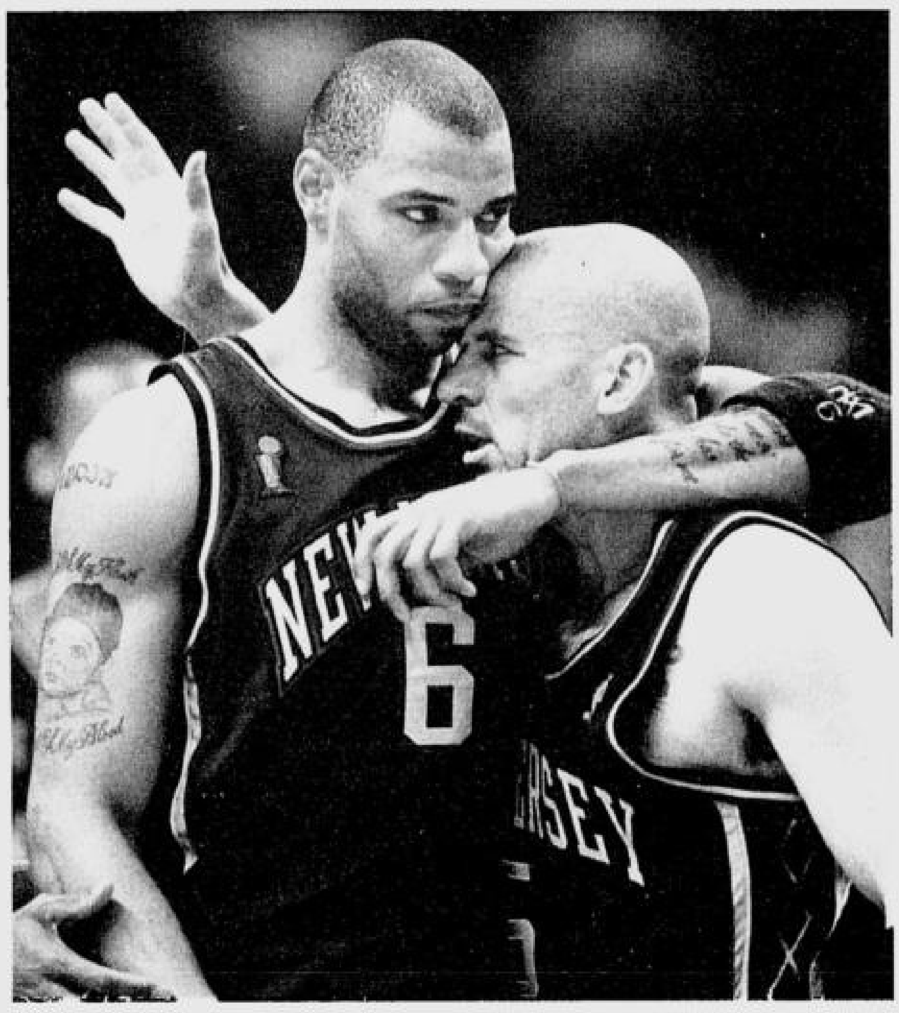
The twice league MVP was unstoppable in Game One, contributing 32 points and dominating the boards with 20 rebounds.

But in Game Two the Nets were able to keep Duncan in check while Kidd, rated the best playmaker in the NBA, found his rhythm to put New Jersey back in the title hunt.

"I think they (the Nets) have great confidence right now," said Duncan. "They're on a high just like we were after Game One.

Reuters

Martin may not have to guard Tim Duncan



DYNAMIC DUO. Kenyon Martin and Jason Kidd

AFP

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey—The New Jersey Nets might have a way slow down Tim Duncan in the NBA Finals.

New Jersey limited Duncan to 19 points and 12 rebounds with an array of bumps, pushes, hacks and defenses on Friday night, evening the best-of-seven series with an 87-85 victory in Game 2.

"We were a little more physical with him and kept him away from the basket," center Jason Collins said. "We came with the double team and made him pick up his dribble, that way he couldn't find his teammates that easy."

The Nets will get a chance to if the defense works as the series resumes Sunday in New Jersey with Game 3 at the Continental Airlines Arena.

New Jersey is 6-1 at home in the playoffs, winning its last five games.

If things stay the same, Duncan is going to see a number of defenders again, although Kenyon Martin may not play the two-time defending MVP as much.

Martin got into foul trouble in the first two games, and the Nets were able to have Collins and Dikembe Mutombo muscle Duncan.

Several times during the game, Duncan stared at the officials when he didn't get a call after either missing a shot or having the ball taken away.

"They did a great job of playing between guys and they just found a way to kind of cut off the lanes," said Duncan, who had 32 points and 20 rebounds in Game 1. "I thought they were very good on defense."

The one thing the Nets did a lot better Friday was making sure Duncan felt pressure any time he got the ball close to the basket. Not only was he being bumped from behind, but the Nets were also 'digging down' with nearby defenders to help out.

It's not actually a double team, but it looks and feels like one.

"We wanted to get it (the ball) out of his hands," Nets coach Byron Scott said. "That's what we do to any great post-up player."

Mutombo, who had played only 33 minutes in the first three rounds of the playoffs, was also huge. The four-time NBA defensive player of the year gave New Jersey a presence in the lane and forced Duncan to compete against someone 5 cm taller.

"He is their playmaker, and how he goes is how the Spurs go," said Mutombo, who got a postseason personal-high of 20 minutes Friday. "We cannot stop him, but if we can find a way to slow him down we are going to have great success in this series."

Spurs coach Gregg Popovich said that the Nets didn't do anything that Duncan hasn't seen this season, although they may have played the defense better than most team.

San Antonio didn't help itself. The Spurs had 21 turnovers and missed 11 free throws. Expect them to adjust.

"We just didn't play smart," center David Robinson said. "You look at that first half, we drove and we tried to throw it through three guys. We were just giving the ball away. It was stupid stuff. That's not the way we play basketball."

The victory was the Nets' first in six NBA Finals games. They were swept by the Lakers last season.

NBA FINALS 2003

San Antonio vs New Jersey

Spurs 1, Nets 1

Game 1: San Antonio 101, New Jersey 89
Game 2: New Jersey 87, San Antonio 85
Game 3 at New Jersey (June 9, 8:30 a.m.)
Game 4 at New Jersey (June 12, 8:30 a.m.)
Game 5 at New Jersey (June 14, 8:30 a.m.)
*Game 6 at San Antonio (June 16, 8:30 a.m.)
*Game 7 at San Antonio (June 19, 8:30 a.m.)

*IF NECESSARY
(MANILA TIME, 2-3-2 FORMAT)

Big foe for Lewis

LAS VEGAS—An injury to Kirk Johnson may end up giving Lennox Lewis one big opponent and another big fight.

Lewis said Saturday night he may replace Johnson with 6-foot-7 (200-centimeter) Vitali Klitschko on June 21, then possibly fight Roy Jones Jr. late this year.

"I definitely want to fight Vitali Klitschko. I think it would be a great fight for Los Angeles," Lewis said. "If Roy Jones steps up to the plate and he wants to fight Lennox Lewis, we'll have another fight after that."

Klitschko is the No. 1 contender for Lewis' WBC heavyweight title and was scheduled to fight on the undercard of the June 21 fight at Staples Center between Lewis and Johnson. But, with Johnson pulling out with an injury on Friday, Lewis said he may fight Klitschko instead.

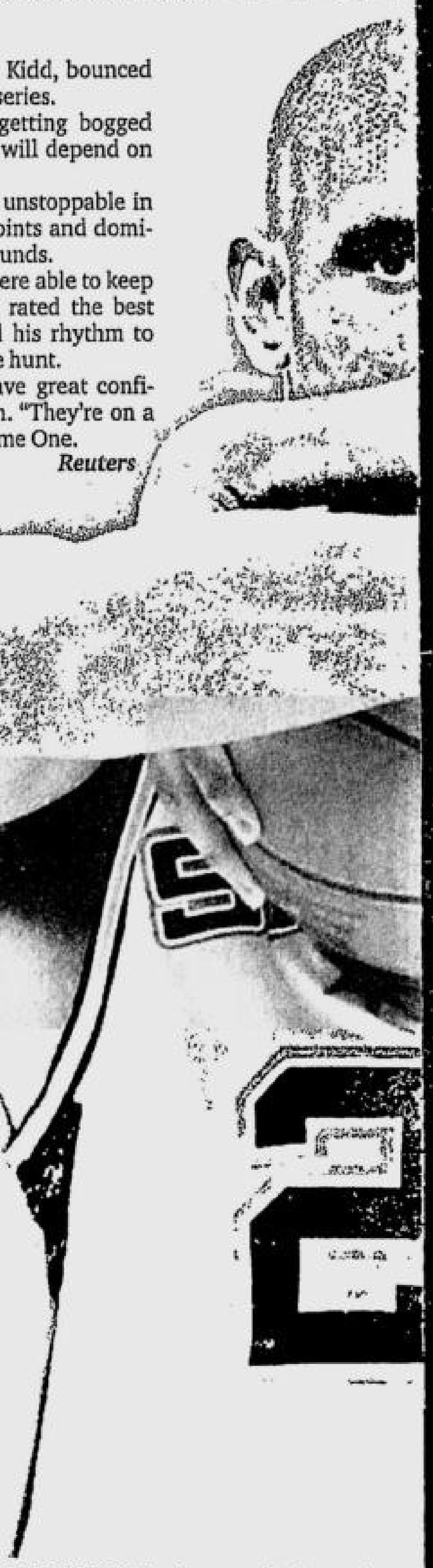
Lewis has already agreed to fight Klitschko by the end of the year, but the injury to Johnson could move up the timetable.

"There's definitely a big chance it can happen," Lewis said in Atlantic City, where he was watching the Arturo Gatti-Micky Ward fight.

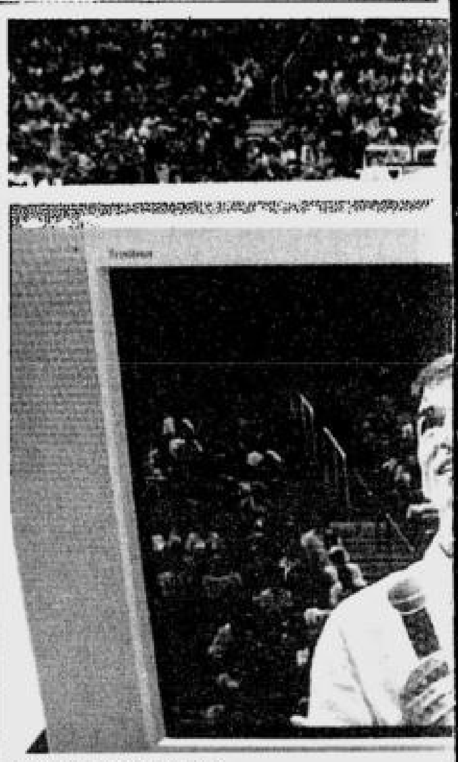
The promoter for Jones is trying to arrange a heavyweight title bout with Evander Holyfield for Nov. 1 in New York, but said Jones would fight Lewis if that fight can't be negotiated.

Murad Muhammad said Saturday the Holyfield fight is the one Jones wants next but promoter Don King has shown little interest.

AP



WEAK LINK. Tim Duncan, the league's mos
for the San Antonio Spurs in Game 2.



DYNAMIC DUO
Utah Jazz guard John Stockton is shown o
during a going away celebration Saturday
team's dynamic duo bids him a tearful fare

Manchester U may send Beckham to Italy or Spain

BECKHAM. New hairstyle and possibly new team.

AP

MANCHESTER, England—David Beckham's departure from Manchester United appeared more likely on Saturday when the club confirmed that teams from Spain and Italy had made firm approaches to sign the England captain.

The star's future has been the subject of speculation on an almost daily basis after Real Madrid, Inter Milan, AC Milan and, most recently, Barcelona had declared an interest in hiring him.

Although Beckham, who has two years left on his contract at Old Trafford, has said he wants to stay, the Reds owners may be tempted to sell him if they receive a bid of something like US$48 million.

Reports in Spain and Italy suggest that interest from Real Madrid and Inter has cooled. But Joan Laporta, who is bidding to become Barcelona's next president, has said he would like to hire Beckham and told reporters on Saturday his talks with Manchester United were "progressing well."

The Reds have said little amid the media speculation but issued a statement on Saturday confirming they had received interest from other clubs.

"Manchester United can confirm today that clubs from Italy and Spain have expressed a firm interest in signing David Beckham," said the statement, which came on the day newspaper reports said Beckham was to receive an honor—the Officer of the Order of the British Empire or OBE—from Queen Elizabeth II.

"David's advisers, SFX, have also been approached by clubs independently and we are in regular and close contact with them regarding the status of those discussions, which are ongoing. David has been kept informed while on holiday."

Almost a month ago, Manchester United chief executive Peter Kenyon admitted that a big transfer bid would have to be considered.

"I think we have to look at those kind of offers, it would be remiss not to," he said.

"The success of Manchester United is about the team. David Beckham is an essential part of our team. But ultimately players retire, there is a life span and there will reach a time when we have to replace him."

AP

SMOKIN' MIKE

AP

Michael Jordan chomps a cigar as he takes a shot on the second hole at the Mellon Mario Lemieux Celebrity Invitational in Presto, Pa., Saturday.

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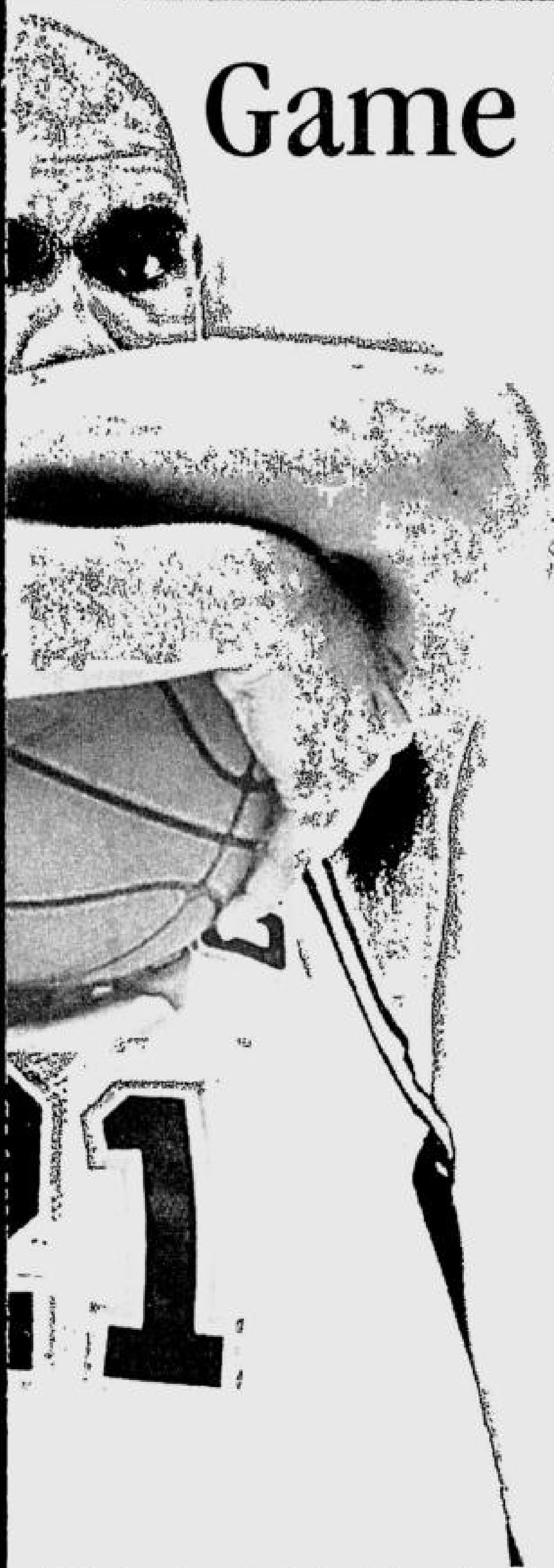
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Game 2 exposed flaw in Spurs' game



t valuable player, turned out to be also the weakest link

AFP

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey—Tim Duncan has more in common with Shaquille O'Neal than dominating the Western Conference, winning MVP awards and playing for championships.

Neither are very good from the foul line.

The biggest flaw in Duncan's otherwise superb game was exposed in Game 2 of the NBA Finals. His seven missed free throws, including three in the final 3:39, were especially costly considering the San Antonio Spurs lost to the New Jersey Nets by only two, 87-85.

"I make a couple of those," Duncan said, "it's a whole different ballgame."

Overall, the Spurs were 14-of-25 (56 percent) from the line in Game 2. It was their worst performance this postseason and 1 percent above the worst in team playoff history.

But it wasn't too out of character.

San Antonio made only 72.5 percent in the regular season, fourth-worst in the league. The only teams less accurate were lowly Toronto, Chicago and Detroit.

In the playoffs, the Spurs are down to 70.6 percent, 16th among the 16 playoff teams from both conferences.

"It's been a challenge," center David Robinson said. "It doesn't make any sense to worry about it now. You've got to make up for it in other parts of the game."

Duncan is the perfect example.

He came in to the NBA Finals averaging more points, rebounds and assists than he did in the regular season—and, remember, he was the MVP. However, there was one category where his numbers have gone down. Yeah, you guessed it.

Duncan is shooting 65.6 percent from the line in the playoffs, even after a respectable 10-of-14 in Game 1. He made 71 percent in the regular season, matching his career average.

There's no real reason for it. His form looks solid enough, with no herky-jerky motions. There's none of the one-handed, dart-throwing style O'Neal uses. They just don't go in.

Duncan's poor aim Friday night was obvious from the first time he went to the line.

Just 2:01 in, the ball came off his hand looking as if it was flung from a sling shot. It rammed into the front rim with no chance of going in. Another brick followed. And another. And another. The drought ended early in the fourth quarter with two makes in a row.

By then, the Spurs were starting to chip away at a 15-point deficit. It was down to five when Duncan drove the lane and got fouled by Kenyon Martin. Martin fouled Duncan again with 24.6 seconds left and New Jersey up three.

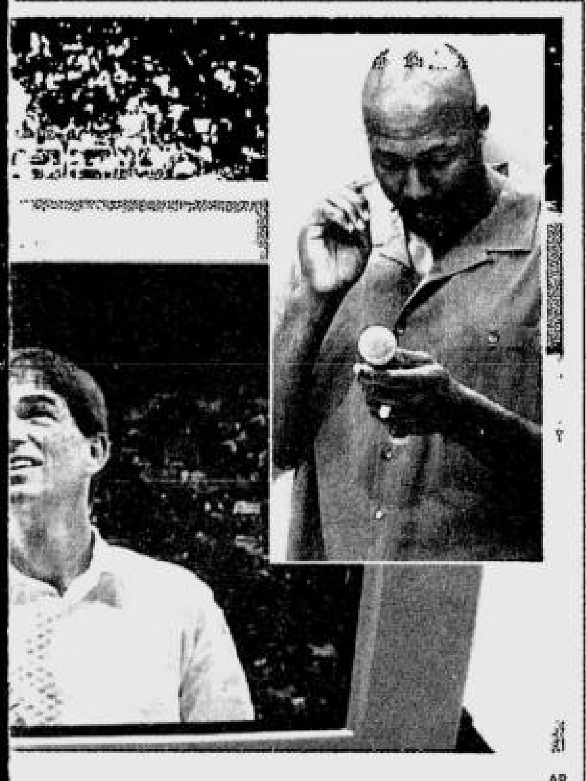
Although Martin was in foul trouble, both were smart fouls. Duncan likely would've made both shots, yet ended up missing three of four free throws.

"I think we wasted a game," Spurs point guard Tony Parker said. "We did that a lot in the playoffs, against Phoenix, against the Lakers, against Dallas. Every time we lose a game it's because of free throws."

The Mavericks beat San Antonio in Game 1 of the Western Conference finals by making 49 free throws in a row, a phenomenal feat even for a team that led the league in foul shooting.

Part of the reason for Dallas' success is that the team employs a free throw coach. Considering the close friendship between Spurs coach Gregg Popovich and his former boss, Mavericks coach Don Nelson, maybe he can arrange for some emergency lessons in time for Game 3 Sunday night.

SOLAR Sports will telecast Game Three of the NBA Finals between the San Antonio Spurs and the New Jersey Nets live at 8:30 a.m. today (Monday, June 9) on both Channel 29 and IBC-13. The replay will be at 7 p.m. on IBC-13 and 9 p.m. on Channel 29. Solar will also telecast Game Four on Thursday live at 8:30 a.m. on both Channel 28 and IBC-13.



AP

n the television monitor as he addresses the crowd
in Salt Lake City. Karl Malone, the other half of the
well (inset).

LEY CUP FINALS

ghty Ducks forge Game 7

California—The Ana-
y Ducks' comeback was
enough. Paul Kariya's
the storybooks.
veled by a hit from Scott
was so hard it appeared
seriously hurt, returned
first goal of the series,
ghty Ducks evened the
finals by beating New
in Game 6 Saturday

unbelievable," Steve
d. "What a great goal.
leader."
as invisible for much of
as he couldn't escape
trapping defense. But
wo of the Ducks' three
with the breakthrough
h Mike Babcock said
ry from him to force a

scored the Ducks' first
out 4½ minutes apart in
, all-offense first period
ed that of the Devils' 6-3
ame 5, when each team

Jersey, which looked flat
red at the start for a
ition to win the Stanley
t's a familiar story. This is
time in three years the
n't close out the finals in Game 6; they lost 4-0 in Game 6 to Colorado in 2001, then lost Game 7, too.

"We had a great opportunity to finish a series and let it slip away," Devils defenseman Scott Niedermayer said. "We just didn't play our game again. We weren't playing as a team, and that's how we have to play in order to be successful."

Added Devils coach Pat Burns: "I was surprised we did that."

In what is threatening to become the first finals since 1965 in which the home team wins every game, Game 7 will be Monday night in the New Jersey swamp. The Devils have outscored the Ducks 12-3 there in three wins all decided by three goals apiece. Anaheim outscored New Jersey 9-4 in the three games at the Pond.

If Anaheim can somehow find a way to win Monday, the Ducks will be the first team since 1971 to rally from a 2-0 deficit to win the Stanley Cup.

That Colorado comeback in 2001 also marked the only time since Montreal rallied past Chicago in 1971 that a team leading the finals hasn't held a 3-2 lead. If the Mighty Ducks go from last place a year ago to one of the most unlikely Stanley Cup champions ever, it will be Kariya's comeback that will be remembered.

The Ducks, playing with the desperation expected of a team possibly playing in its last game, led 3-1 in the second period when Stevens leveled Kariya with a violent hit only a moment after the Anaheim captain had passed the puck.

Kariya was in open ice and was vulnerable, but clearly never saw Stevens coming, much like the Flyers' Eric Lindros didn't when he suffered a concussion on a similar hit by Stevens in a 2000 playoff game. Lindros ended up missing an entire season.

Kariya lay motionless for about a minute, the crowd at the Pond barely making a sound, before being helped up and taken to the locker room on wobbly legs.

"I wasn't out cold," Kariya said. "I was right there."

Kariya said he thought the hit was a little late. NHL officials issued a statement saying the hit was legal and not subject to a penalty.

Despite appearing to lose consciousness, Kariya returned to the bench quickly and was back in the game less than five minutes. Only a few minutes after that, he was on the scoreboard for the first time in a series.

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Henin-Hardenne wins it for everyone

FRENCH OPEN women's champion Justine Henin-Hardenne poses with her trophy before the Eiffel Tower. REUTERS

PARIS—Justine Henin-Hardenne won the French Open for Belgium, for her husband and for her coach.

She won it for all the players out there who rely more on precision than power.

Mostly, though, she won it for her late mother, who brought a 10-year-old Justine to Roland Garros to watch a tennis match in person for the first time.

In that same stadium Saturday, Henin-Hardenne dominated countrywoman Kim Clijsters from the start for a 6-0, 6-4 victory. She won the first Grand Slam title of her career and the first for the neighboring nation of 10 million people.

"I would like to dedicate this victory to my mother, who is watching over me in heaven. I hope you are very proud of me, mother," Henin-Hardenne said. "She gave me all the energy I needed to win the match. When I woke up this morning, I said, 'You'll have to win. You'll have to do it for your mom.'"

After four straight finals dominated by the American Williams sisters, this was the first all-Belgian major final in history. King Albert and Queen Paola of Belgium sat in the front row, and Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt made the 300-kilometer (125-mile trip) from Brussels, too.

Predictably, one fan yelled in French, "Go, Belgium!"—just as someone always was clever enough to scream, "Go, Williams!" during the sisters' all-in-the-family finals.

While warming up on center court, Henin-Hardenne stole a glance at the seats where she sat with Mom when her favorite player, Steffi Graf, lost to Monica Seles in the 1992 final. Her mother, Francoise, died of cancer nine years ago.

"It was the first tournament I went to. It was just amazing. I was a little girl who was coming to see her idols," Henine-Hardenne recounted.

"I said, 'One day, I'll be on this court, and maybe I'll win.' And today I did."

And she produced the most lopsided French Open women's final since Graf's 6-0, 6-0 win over Natasha Zvereva in 1988.

Henin-Hardenne has been on the wrong end of that sort of score, having lost the 2001 Wimbledon final to Venus Williams 6-0 in the third set. The Belgian faltered in the late stages of other Grand Slams, too, eliminated in the semifinals three times, including at the 2001 French Open. She blew a 6-2, 4-2 lead against Clijsters that day, but Henin-Hardenne is mentally stronger now.

JUSTICE Henin-Hardenne celebrates: "Today, I win." REUTERS

"Justine is a very emotional person; today was a very big test," said Carlos Rodriguez, her coach since she was 14. "Now I see a girl who is confident of her potential, and I know she can go further."

When Clijsters' forehand hit the net on match point, Henin-Hardenne tossed her racket, looked up to the sky, and covered her face.

After embracing Clijsters, the champion walked off the court. She reappeared in the guest box, where she graciously granted a TV interview before wading through a crowd to hug her husband of seven months and Rodriguez.

Later, the fourth-seeded Henin-Hardenne called the title "great for my career, but it's not everything in life," adding: "I have people that I love around me, and that's the most important thing."

She dictated points by placing groundstrokes right where she wanted them, often in the corners. Henin-Hardenne long has owned the smoothest backhand in women's tennis, and her forehand was just as effective.

"Justine just didn't give me anything for free," said Clijsters, who'll play in the doubles final Sunday, her 20th birthday. "I hope I can get another chance."

Despite the score, she had plenty of chances against Henin-Hardenne. Clijsters held six break points in the first set, but converted none.

Then, trailing 3-2 in the second set, Clijsters had two more break points, but ceded the game with five errant shots. One was particularly ugly: A sky hook that landed in the middle of the net.

She finally broke serve to get to 4-4 in the second set, and Henin-Hardenne briefly thought about what happened here in 2001.

It also riled up a crowd filled with Belgians looking for any excuse to make noise. Clijsters hopped at the baseline, pumping herself up, while her boyfriend, Wimbledon champion Lleyton Hewitt, clapped.

The intrigue lasted all of three minutes, the amount of time it took Henin-Hardenne to break right back with a forehand winner off a short·backhand slice by Clijsters.

A year ago at Roland Garros, Henin was upset in the first round by a qualifier. She was much more resilient the past two weeks, beating No. 19 Patty Schnyder, No. 8 Chanda Rubin and No. 1 Serena Williams.

By backing up her semifinal upset of Williams with a win over another hard hitter, No. 2 Clijsters, Henin-Hardenne became just the ninth player to beat players ranked Nos. 1 and 2 at a major tournament since computer rankings began in 1975.

Secret of her success: A happy private life

PARIS—Justine Henin-Hardenne's maiden grand slam success at the French Open on Saturday was the result of sublime claycourt tennis and the way she has transformed her once-unhappy private life.

"Tennis is not everything because I have gone through some very difficult things in my life," said the 21-year-old, who became Belgium's first grand slam champion with her 6-4 6-0 win over compatriot Kim Clijsters.

"Tennis is my passion first, but tennis is my job too. I have many things outside the court that are very, very important." Henin-Hardenne, who got married to husband Pierre-Yves last November, has known plenty of heartache. She dedicated her victory to her deceased mother Francoise and is estranged from her father Jose.

Her grandfather died in July 2001—on the same day she was contesting the Wimbledon final with Venus Williams—and the diminutive Belgian said those events had helped her to bring a new perspective to her life.

"I have a family, I have friends that I love," she said.

"Everybody is healthy, that is the most important thing.

"When I was in the final of Wimbledon it was a great moment but I had just lost my grandfather.

"Today I just want to enjoy it because everything is fine around me. It's a great day, but not only because I won the French Open.

"When I woke up with my husband he said 'it's not everything. If you win or lose it doesn't matter, we are very proud of you.' "It is very important to me that I know that the people around me love me and they are here to support me."

Reuters

It's strike three for Roger Clemens

CHICAGO—Strike three for Roger Clemens.

The Rocket remained stuck on career victory No. 299 Saturday, watching his bullpen blow his lead with its very first pitch and delay his entry into one of baseball's most exclusive fraternities.

Kerry Wood pitched a gem and substitute Eric Karros hit a three-run homer to lead the Chicago Cubs to a 5-2 victory over the New York Yankees.

Karros was in the game only after a scary collision in the fourth inning sent Cubs first baseman Hee Seop Choi to the hospital. Choi was in fair condition with a concussion.

The traveling road show that's become Clemens' pursuit of 300 now goes right back to where it started May 26—Yankee Stadium. Clemens (6-4) will face St. Louis on Friday night, trying to become the 21st pitcher—and first since Nolan Ryan in 1990—with 300 victories.

Clemens lost to Boston in his first bid, then blew a six-run lead at Detroit.

In just his fifth career start, Wood matched Clemens' 20-strikeout record. Clemens has done it twice.

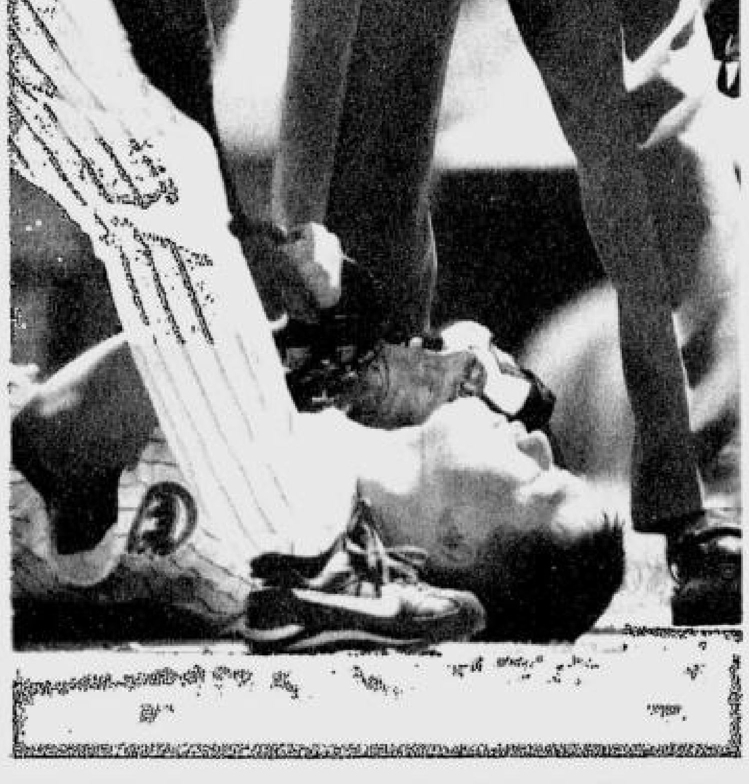
In San Francisco, Barry Bonds hit one of San Francisco's four home runs and Jason Schmidt pitched seven strong innings.

Andres Galarraga, Jose Cruz Jr. and Marquis Grissom also homered for the Giants, who improved to 8-3 on their season-long 12-game homestand. They wrap it up Sunday with a chance to sweep the struggling Tigers.

Bonds' two-run homer in the eighth gave him 628 for his career and 15 this season. The 41-year-old Galarraga connected two batters later for his fourth homer of the year and career shot No. 390.

Detroit starter Mike Maroth (1-11) gave up two runs and six hits in six innings.

Schmidt (5-2) allowed one run and six hits, striking out eight.



KNOCKED OUT. First baseman Hee Seop Choi of the Chicago Cubs lies on the ground unconscious after colliding with pitcher Kerry Wood and hitting his head on the ground while trying to catch a pop-up in the 4th inning. He was taken to the hospital with a concussion. AFP

Orioles 8, Cardinals 1

In St. Louis, Deivi Cruz homered twice and Sidney Ponson pitched his second complete game in three starts, leading Baltimore past St. Louis.

Melvin Mora and Jeff Conine also homered for Baltimore, which snapped a four-game skid and ended the Cardinals' five-game winning streak.

The former city rivals wore old-style jerseys—with the Orioles donning St. Louis Browns uniforms—to commemorate the only all-St. Louis World Series in 1944. The Browns left to become the Baltimore Orioles after the 1953 season.

Ponson (8-3) allowed seven hits, struck out eight and walked two for his 20th career complete game and second this season. The right-hander has won seven of his last eight starts, including his last four.

St. Louis starter Garrett Stephenson (3-5) gave up five runs on seven hits, including the four homers, in 5 2-3 innings. Diamondbacks 5, Indians 3

In Phoenix, Shea Hillenbrand hit a two-run triple in the fifth inning, rallying Arizona to a win over Cleveland and former teammate Brian Anderson.

Junior Spivey gave the Diamondbacks, who trailed 3-0, a 5-3 lead with an RBI double off Terry Mulholland in the seventh.

Stephen Randolph (1-0) allowed three walks but no hits or runs in two innings of relief. Andrew Good pitched two scoreless innings.

Jose Valverde struck out the side in the ninth for his second save.

Anderson (3-6), who pitched five seasons for the Diamondbacks before his contract expired in the offseason, gave up four runs on eight hits in 4 2-3 innings.

The Indians lost for the fourth time in five interleague games.

CHEST BUMP. Bob and Mike Bryan congratulate each other after their victory. AP

American twins bag men's doubles crown

PARIS—American twins Mike and Bob Bryan won their first grand slam title together at the French Open on Saturday.

The doubles specialists beat defending champions Paul Haarhuis and Yevgeny Kafelnikov 7-6 6-3 in the final on center court.

The third-seeded Californians edged a tight first set on a tiebreak 7-3 before pulling away in the second set for victory.

For Mike the victory meant a second title in the French capital after he had already won the mixed doubles with Lisa Raymond on Friday.

"There were definitely some nervous times," Mike said. "But we came through.

"Before we came here I hit Bob with a forehand and he threw his racket at me and it hit me right in the back so I was thinking 'oh great ... this is going to be a great trip.'

"But it turned out pretty well."

"This is going to make the other grand slams easier—the nerves are gone," Bob added.

Reuters

DRIVING IN THE RAIN. Natalie Gulbis hits her tee shot on hole No. 3 en route to a 69 but she was six shots off the lead. AP

Rain wipes out Annika's lead

WILMINGTON, Delaware—Annika Sorenstam lost her two-stroke lead in the three holes she played Saturday in the LPGA Championship before rain drenched DuPont Country Club and suspended the third round.

Sorenstam and Hee-Won Han were at 7-under-par when steady rain left the golf course unplayable and made it unclear whether the major championship could get in 72 holes.

The players were to return at 1130 GMT Sunday to complete the third round, with hopes of starting the final round in the afternoon.

Philippine bet Jenny Rosales was even par through five holes and was tied for seventh place when play was stopped. She bogeyed the second but birdied the fifth.

Dorothy Joy Delasin was in big trouble as she went seven over in six holes.

Sorenstam dropped a shot on the second hole by hitting into the rough, so thick and wet she could only advance it to the fairway. Han made a short birdie putt on No. 1.

Han was in the right rough, playing her third shot to the par-4 fourth hole, when play was suspended. Sorenstam hit her drive in the fairway.

"I think it was the right thing to do," Sorenstam said from her hotel room. "I noticed on the second green and the third green that it was starting to get unplayable."

Rachel Teske birdied the second hole and was at 4-under.

Wendy Ward, playing in the final group with Sorenstam and Han, bogeyed her first three holes to fall to 2-under-par.

Players will remain in the same groups for the third and fourth rounds.

LPGA Tour events rarely carry over into Monday, although players were adamant that everything be done to complete 72 holes.

"It's a must," Sorenstam said. "I hope they try everything they can."

Sorenstam entered the third round on a roll, coming off a 7-under-64 on Friday that was so solid she didn't even realize that a birdie on the final hole would have broken the record for lowest score in a major on any tour.

The tee shot sailed into the right rough, Sorenstam had to chop it back to the fairway and she ended with a bogey.

As she went over her round, someone asked if she had ever made three straight birdies on three separate occasions.

Sorenstam reached into her pocket to check her scores, then looked up in surprise.

"Yeah, I see that," she said. "No, I don't think so. Good observation."

All she cared about in the second round of the McDonald's LPGA Championship was proving to herself that she can play this course.

The LPGA Championship is one of two majors Sorenstam has never won. And while she has earned more money, set more records and won more tournaments than any of her peers on the LPGA Tour, the missing link has been the majors.

Sorenstam took a big step toward fixing that Friday, finishing at 8-under-134. *AP*

Kemper Open rained out

POTOMAC, Maryland—Rain forced PGA Tour officials to postpone Saturday's third round at the Kemper Open until Sunday with South Africa's Rory Sabbatini leading from Friday with an eight-under-par total of 134.

After firing a 62 in the second round, 2001 British Open champion David Duval had jumped into a tie for second on 136 with Sweden's Niclas Fasth, Notah Begay III and Tom Gillis.

The fourth and final round will be played on Monday. The Potomac area has seen rain on 28 of the last 38 days.

The tour had scheduled early times on Saturday hoping to play most of the third round before the predicted rain began, but it arrived early in the morning and no players teed off. *Reuters*

Jenny's designer headed for big time

FASHION designer Lora Roberto has picked up something big while doing a clothing delivery.

With the playing outfits of Jenny Rosales in the LPGA still in her luggage, Roberto tried her luck in one of the sectional qualifyings for the US Women's Amateur Public Links Championship in Honolulu, Hawaii and grabbed one of the three slots recently.

The diminutive Roberto scored a four-over-par 76 at the Ala Wai Golf Club to finish third behind Mari Chun (74) and Stephanie Kono (75). Both Chun and Kono are Hawaiian residents.

Roberto suddenly found herself changing her itinerary.

She may have to leave the shipment for Rosales in Los Angeles for a while as she heads to Palm Coast, Florida for the tournament proper at the Ocean Hammock Golf Club on June 17-22.

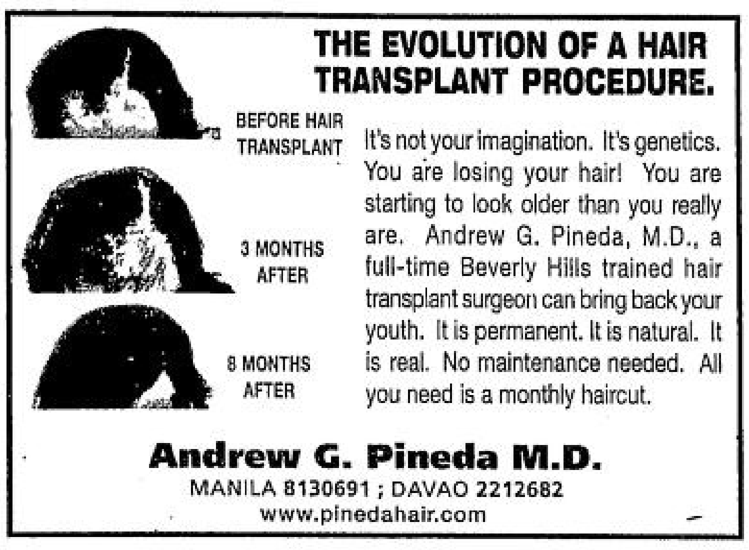
The Public Links is one of the major events in the United States Golf Association calendar, next in prestige to the US Amateur.

Roberto is also expected to play in one of the US Amateur qualifying events while in the US.

She will finally get to meet Rosales, who is now in Wilmington, Delaware for the McDonald's LPGA Championship, in the US Women's Open in Portland, Oregon.

Roberto helps design the playing apparel of Rosales in the LPGA that has caught the fancy not just of her fellow players but also the American media.

Roberto also caddies for Rosales in some of her LPGA events. *Jong Arcano*



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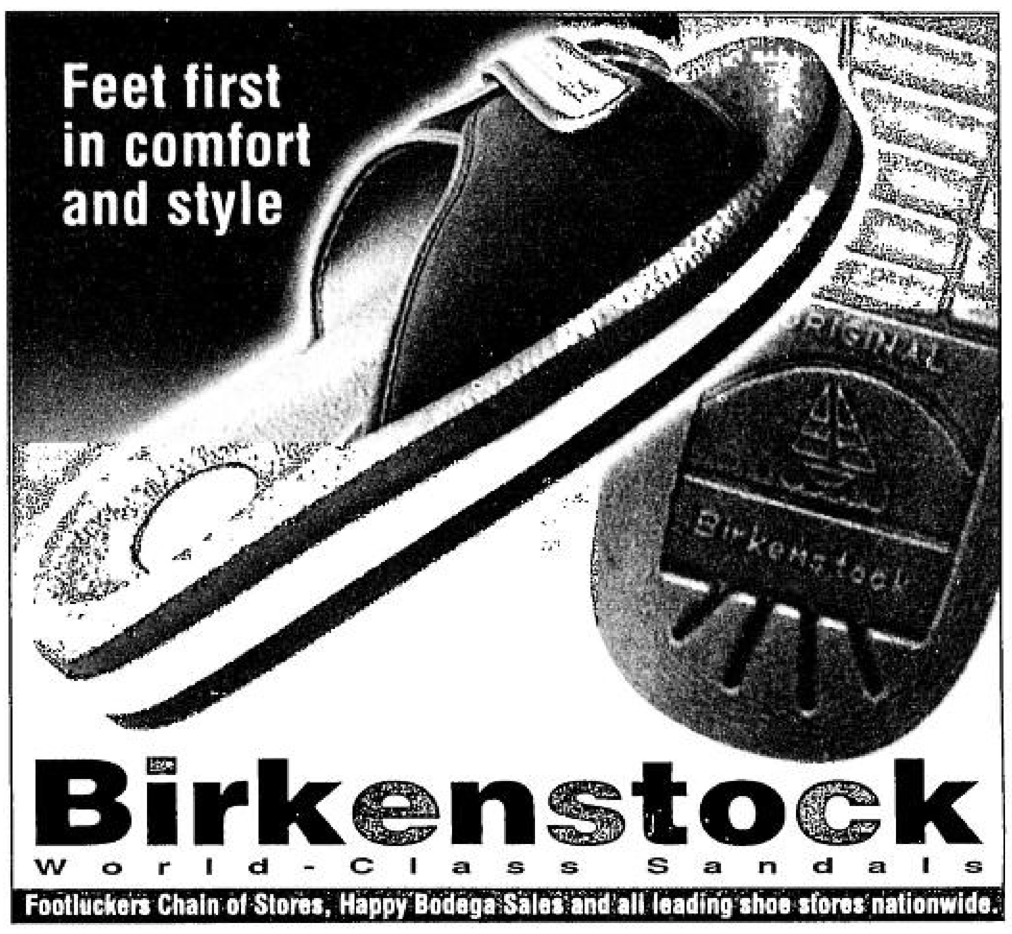

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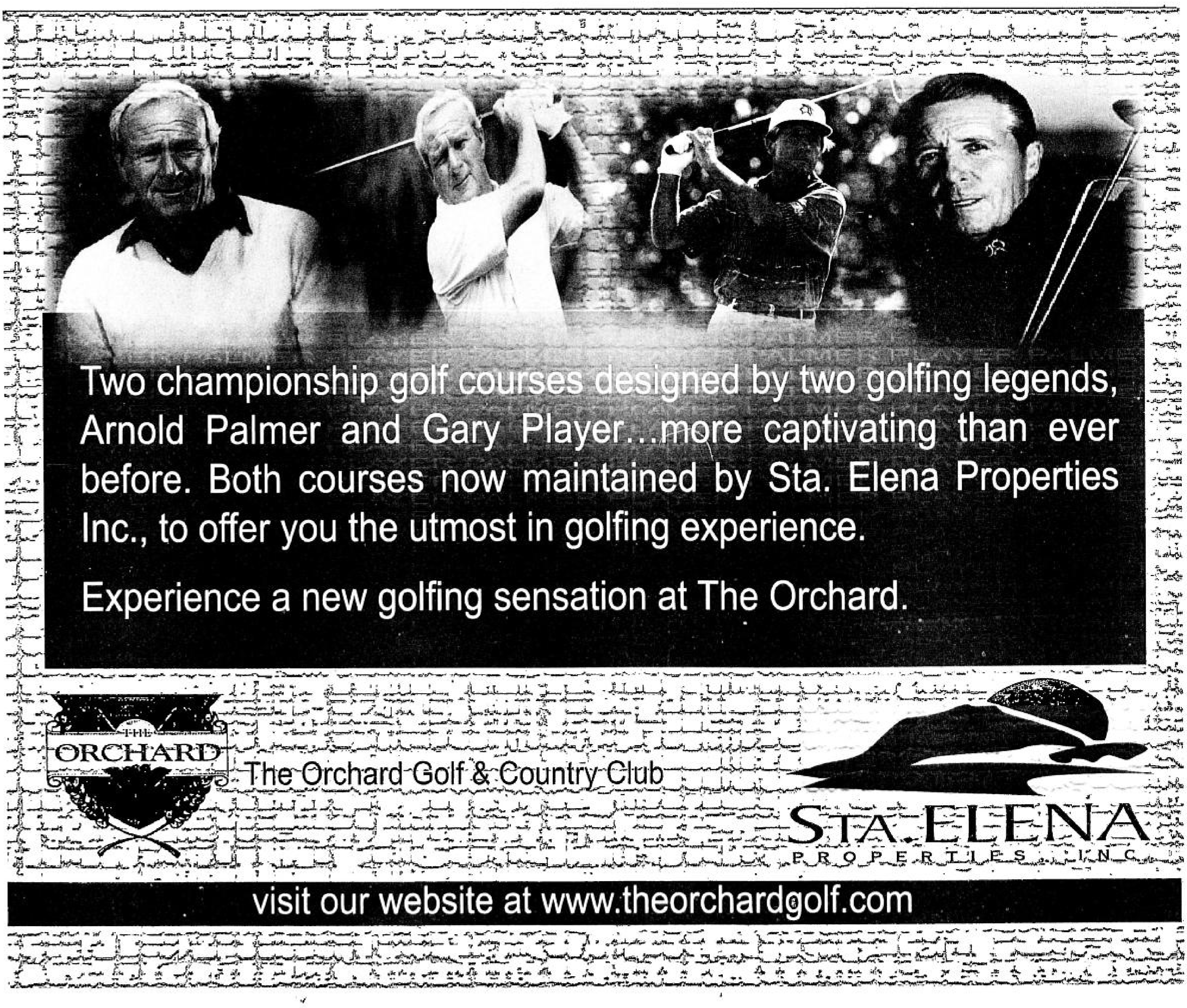

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SPORTS

NO TRIPLE CROWN

Funny Cide's wild run ends

NEW YORK—Funny Cide's improbable run at the Triple Crown ended in the mud at the Belmont Stakes, splashed aside by a rival who wasn't about to let a gelded nobody become part of racing royalty.

Empire Maker caught Funny Cide on the far turn and beat him soundly, a defeat that left racing still longing for its first Triple Crown winner since Affirmed in 1978. That stretch is now the longest in history.

Despite a steady rain, Funny Cide drew the second-largest Belmont crowd, 101,864, who hoped to see the New York-bred join the likes of Triple Crown winners Secretariat and War Admiral. It was not to be.

Instead, he became the fifth Kentucky Derby-Preakness winner in the last seven years to come up short in the 1.5-mile (2.4-kilometer) Belmont.

This time Empire Maker turned the tables on Funny Cide, who upset trainer Bobby Frankel's colt in the Kentucky Derby. The colt ran up alongside Funny Cide and jockey Jerry Bailey cruised home in the slop, holding off closer Ten Most Wanted by three quarters of a length.

Funny Cide, sent right to the lead by jockey Jose Santos, finished third, five lengths behind the winner. The first gelding to challenge for the Triple Crown never seemed to handle the sloppy surface.

Empire Maker was timed in 2:28.26, giving Frankel his first win in a Triple Crown race. The Hall of Famer was 0-9 in the series, but had come close twice before in the Belmont. Medaglia d'Oro was second last year, and Aptitude was the runner-up in 2000.

In the days leading up to the race, Frankel relished the role of spoiler, saying, "I hope everybody hates me after the race–then I'll know I did well."

Bailey said he knew he had Funny Cide beat "from the top of the backside."

"I knew he'd wear himself out," he said.

Santos' son and daughter were tearing up before the horses even entered the starting gate. And after the chestnut ran out of gas in the stretch, the jockey's wife consoled Jose Jr. and told him, "It's OK."

Empire Maker, owned by Saudi prince Khalid Abdullah, bruised his foot Derby week and finished 1 3/4 lengths behind Funny Cide. He skipped the Preakness, but was "dead fit" for Belmont, Frankel said.

Funny Cide's trainer Barclay Tagg was disappointed he couldn't deliver a Triple Crown.

"I feel bad for all the people who were behind him wanting him to win this," Tagg said. "I was pretty confident."

Funny Cide put in a sizzling final workout Tuesday, leading to speculation that he might have left his best race on the track.

Tagg said that wasn't the case. *AP*

FUNNY Cide (second from right) is closely followed by Empire Maker (second from right) as they hit the backstretch during the Belmont Stakes on Saturday. Also shown (from left) are Ten Most Wanted, Dynever and Scrimshaw. Top photo shows winning jockey Jerry Bailey pumping his fist as he guides Empire Maker to the winner's circle.

AP, AFP

'It was always a wonderful ride'

NEW YORK—Jose Santos enjoyed the ride, and he was smiling even after it ended in defeat for Funny Cide on a gloomy, rainy day.

As Santos guided Funny Cide onto the track for Saturday's Belmont Stakes, he grinned and acknowledged the thundering cheers of 101,864 partisan fans eager to see the New York-bred gelding become racing's first Triple Crown winner in 25 years.

"I think 864 were rooting for another horse, the rest were rooting for Funny Cide," Santos said.

Minority ruled.

Funny Cide didn't like the sloppy goo he was forced to run in, and he tugged relentlessly against Santos' hold from the start. After the gate opened, Santos shot a quick glance to his left, already concerned about rival Empire Maker along the rail.

He had reason to be. Empire Maker and jockey Jerry Bailey tucked in behind front-running Funny Cide; tracking the gelding to the last of Belmont Park's sweeping turns before taking the lead for good at the top of the stretch.

"I knew exactly what was going to happen," Santos said. "I felt Jerry Bailey right next to me." *AP*

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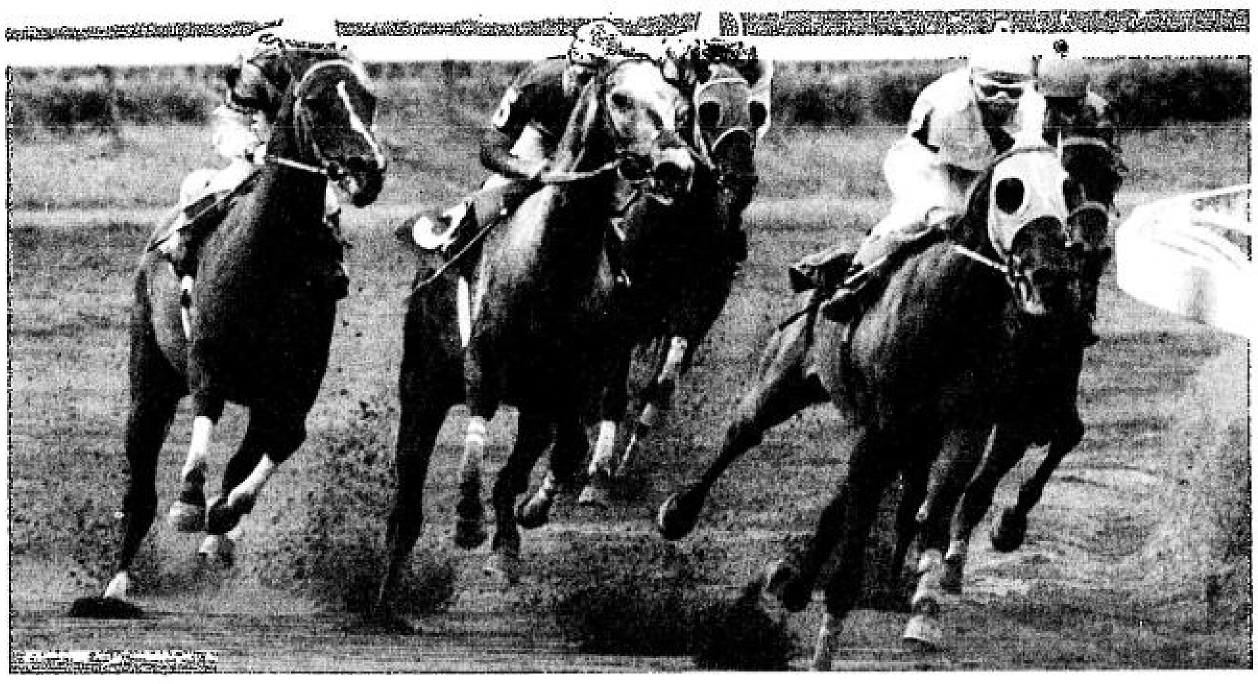

SECURITY Master (left) and Success Story (5) stalk pacesetter Major Leaguer as the field hit the first bend. Success Story went on to beat Security Master by half a length.

JESS YUSON

Success Story, Lyonnais win

By Edwin Villanueva

SUCCESS Story and Lyonnais scored big yesterday at the Santa Ana Park.

The second-favored Success Story outdueled top choice Security Master down the wire to capture the PCSO Grand Championship, while battle-tested Lyonnais displayed his big finishing kick anew to rule the second Mayor Jejomar Binay Cup.

In the day's most exciting contest, Success Story, handled by Jeffril Zarate, and Security Master, steered by Val Dilema, fought tooth-and-nail up to the final turn with the rail-hugging Success Story flashing home half a length ahead to pocket P600,000 for the Niles Stable.

"One-on-one *na ang laban salamat naman nakatagal* (It's a one-on-one duel and fortunately my mount lasted)," said Zarate after the 1,500-meter race which Success Story covered in a fast 1:34.8 (18-24.5-23-29).

It was another disappointing loss for Myther Buñag's Security Master who only two weeks back landed only fifth as favorite in the Cojuangco Cup. Success Story was fourth in that event won by West Bound.

Security Master settled for P200,000, with Namaste finishing third for P100,000 after nipping Iverson in the photo. Major Leaguer wound up fifth and last.

In the Binay Cup, Lyonnais watched from third as his highly fancied coupled entry Ouzo engaged Hazmoore in a furious duel.

Lyonnais, a noted stayer, eventually swept past the tiring leaders at the home turn and drew clear for a three-length victory in the 1,800-meter race under the whip of veteran Elpidio Aguila..

"*Gustung gusto ni Lyonnais na nanonood muna ng naglulutsahan bago rumemate. Buti nag*-respond (Lyonnais just loves to watch the pacesetters before mounting a rally. It's good he responded)," Aguila said of the five-year-old, Hazm-Leveret progeny who bagged P400,000.

Catwalk Pia, the far second pick, seized runner-up spot worth P100,000, with Ouzo fading to third for P50,000.

Ouzo came into the race hoping to stretch her winning streak to six but Hazmoore, another known speedball, proved to be a big thorn on her side as both wilted down the stretch. Perfect Storm checked in fourth, while Hazmoore brought up the rear at fifth.

Winning time was P1:54.8 (13.5-21.5-26-25.5-29).

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ADB survey lists investors' complaints

By Michelle V. Remo

AN INVESTMENT climate survey by the Asian Development Bank has cited complicated business regulations, poor infrastructure, time lag in getting goods from the Bureau of Customs, and corruption as the major turn-off for investors.

According to ADB economist Ernesto Pernia, the country risked losing even the existing investments if the government would not double its efforts at improving the business environment in the country.

"The Philippines has a lot to improve on, especially in terms of infrastructure," Pernia said.

The ADB's investment climate survey was started in February and is expected to be finished in July.

The survey has already covered 400 companies among the 800 target respondents coming from various business sectors.

The ADB economist said that among the business impediments raised, it was the problem on poor infrastructure that was being complained the most.

He said most of the businessmen surveyed so far complained that roads here were far inferior compared with those in other countries and that power supply and shipping costs here were much higher.

"The Philippines' infrastructure situation is probably 20 years behind those of Thailand and Malaysia," Pernia said.

He said the Philippines' only edge--its well-trained labor force--was even becoming insufficient to compensate the constraints that businessmen find in doing business in the country.

He said that although the country's quality of labor force was an attraction, labor cost here was becoming uncompetitive and that labor productivity has been stagnating since the early 1980s.

"Labor cost and productivity should rise at the same pace, otherwise wage increases would become unsustainable," he said.

The economist noted that the country's labor force might eventually lose its edge since other countries have continually spent for improving education, while the Philippine has not done the same.

"If the government is doing anything (to address the concerns of businessmen), it is not not making a dent yet. It really has to do a lot more to make a difference," Pernia said.

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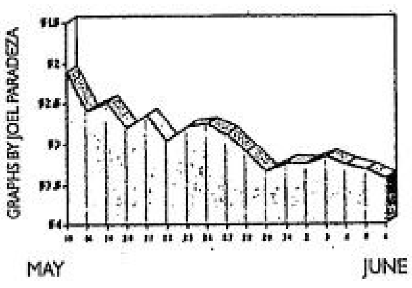

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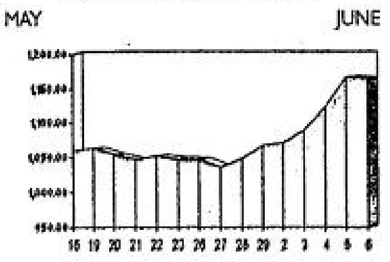
STOCK MARKET

Stock rebound seen to continue

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

FOREIGN interest in emerging Asian markets and encouraging economic data lifted the country's main stock market index by 8.4 percent last week and could further push the index higher this week though a correction appears imminent.

"The market had a great run last week but should be due for a pause. Some investors are expected to cash in on the strong gains," Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities said. "It's been posting positive gains, pushing stocks to overbought levels. There's no question that the market has ran up too fast and too far. It has moved ahead of fundamentals, which have remained sound but haven't improved significantly."

The Philippine Composite Index surged 90.14 points to close at 1,163.84 last Friday as foreign clients started calling brokers for blue-chip stocks.

One broker said he had never been busier and that foreign clients were keeping the phones ringing.

"There's growing confidence that the economy is improving and a lot had to do with the prevailing sound fundamentals," Vistan noted.

Vistan cited benign May inflation of 2.7 percent, preliminary data that the government had more or less met revenue targets that month, declining treasury bill rates, and the decision of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to reimpose a tiering system on overnight rates, effectively cutting them.

"The move is seen to further enhance the liquidity situation and bring more funds to the equities market and encourage banks to lend to the public instead of placing their excess funds with the BSP," Vistan said.

BPI Trade said that given successive days of gains, a correction is

STOCKS/ B6

Unique goal binds scions of rich RP families

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr

THE PARMON Group, a Singapore-based investment firm owned by scions of some of the Philippines' richest families, is scouring for opportunities in infrastructure and property development in Luzon and the Visayas that it hopes would attract foreign capital into the country.

Parmon founder and chair Paul Monozca said at least five prominent Singapore, US and Malaysian property developers were waiting for the results of its project studies for the development of two provinces in Luzon and the Visayas.

In his reply to the INQUIRER's questions via e-mail, Monozca said the master plan for the countryside development projects were being drawn up by CPG Corp. (which made the blueprint for the citystate's development) with technical inputs from the MITC Institute of the Yuchengco group.

"We all understand that if we do not start master planning our countryside in a way that is fit for international investors, we will be left behind for good," Monozca said.

Parmon draws inspiration from San Miguel Corp.'s nationwide contract growing pro gram, which provides capital and expertise to the small farmer, and Agriculture Secretary

UNIQUE/ B7

From left: (Standing) investment banker Arnold Alafriz, Parmon Group chair Paul Monozca, Lauro Leviste II, Parmon Group managing director Ted Ly. (Seated) Antonio Palanca Quirino III, Mark B. Chiongbian, Marco Yuchengco Santos.

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Tax on vehicles seen to triple

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE RECENT amendments in the Senate bill reforming automotive taxes have more than doubled the proposed tax load of vehicles from the original version, according to Truck Manufacturers Association Inc. president Elizabeth Lee.

Based on the changes in Senate Bill No. 2517 (which was approved on second reading Thursday before Congress went into recess), Lee said the effective tax rate on vehicles worth between P600,000 and P2 million would be pegged at 55 percent compared to the 22 percent in the original draft made by Sen. Recto and endorsed by the Department of Finance.

The amended SB 2517 imposes a 2-percent tax on vehicles worth P600,000 and below; P12,000 for vehicles worth between P600,001 and P1 million plus a 20-percent tax in excess of P600,000; P92,000 for vehicles worth between P1,000,001 and P2 million plus 100-percent tax in excess of P1 million; and 150 percent for vehicles worth more than P2 million.

In the original bill, the minimum rate was set at 3 percent for vehicles worth P500,000 and below; the tax rate on vehicles worth between P500,000 and P2 million ranged from 15 percent to 30 percent; and the highest rate was set at only 50 percent.

The changes were apparently made to reduce the tax burden on entry-level passenger cars and Asian utility vehicles (AUV) while shifting more of the tax load on premium and luxury vehicles bought by upper class buyers.

Lee said the skewed tax rates were expected to drive up prices of pick-ups, vans, premium AUVs, full-size sport utility vehicles (SUV), and luxury vehicles.

VITARICH

VITARICH CORPORATION
NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS
Friday, 27 June 2003 at 2:00 P.M.
Columbus Room, Discovery Suites, ADB Avenue
, Ortigas Center, Pasig City

TO ALL STOCKHOLDERS:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of **VITARICH CORPORATION** (the " Corporation") will be held on **27 June 2003 at 2:00 p.m.** at the Columbus Room, Discovery Suites, ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

The Agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Certification of Notice to Stockholders and Presence of a Quorum
3. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Stockholders' Meeting
4. Report by the Chairman - Chief Executive Officer
5. Confirmation and Ratification of the Acts of the Board of Directors and Officers
6. Election of Directors for the Ensuing Year
7. Appointment of External Auditors
8. Appointment of the Stock and Transfer Agent
9. Other Matters
10. Adjournment.

For the purpose of determining the stockholders entitled to notice and to vote at the meeting, the record date is 28 May 2003. The Stock and Transfer Books of the Corporation shall be closed from 28 May 2003 to 27 June 2003.

Proxies must be submitted to the Special Committee of Election Inspectors of the Corporation at the Executive Office of the Corporation at Unit W902-B Tektite Tower, PSE Building, Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City on or before 17 June 2003. Proxies shall be validated by the Special Committee of Inspectors at the Executive Office of the Corporation on 20 June 2003

On the day of the meeting, you or your duly designated proxy are hereby required to bring this notice and any form of identification such as driver's license, passport, company I.D., voter's I.D., or TIN Card to facilitate registration. Registration shall start at 1:00 p.m. and will close at 1:45 p.m.

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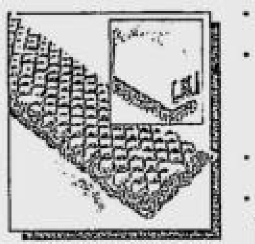

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Take the money and rant

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

WHY does a former executive of a company badmouth his former boss? Most likely he wants something fat. Maybe he has yet to get his huge retirement pay.

That, as somebody suggested to me, could be the case with Ron Brown, a lawyer, who is the former corporate secretary of the Hong Kong-based First Pacific.

Through press conferences with local media by telephone, Ron came out in local media lately with nothing but loathing for his former boss Manny Pangilinan.

News broke out that Manny was back securely at the helm of PLDT and First Pacific, after a tumultuous intra-corporate bout with a faction led by Ron.

Maybe, said this friend of mine, who also could not understand all that sour-graping from the attorney, First Pacific skimped on his retirement pay.

* * *

AND so I checked. It turned out that, according to First Pacific insiders, Ron actually asked for a handsome separation package.

Moreover, First Pacific gave him everything he asked for, and then some. Again it was Manny, Ron's former boss, who decided to give Ron such a good-looking package.

If you are Manny, you should only expect Ron to harbor no bad feelings toward you or the company. After all, Ron already took the money and ran.

But look what Ron is doing now? He is ranting all over the place like a two-bit...you know, whatever two-bits are called.

For if a person does something out of principle, such as attacking his former boss, he can go on criticizing, alright, but he should feel a little shame in getting the money.

Besides, from what I heard, First Pacific did not think Ron was much of a lawyer either. Insiders say that the real lawyer of First Pacific was Robin Nicholson.

That's why, perhaps, Ron's group lost out on the Gokongwei deal for the PLDT takeover. Ron was good in shedding legal darkness on business issues.

IN the beginning, people criticized Gloriaetta for having nothing but 2004 in her mind. It showed in her body language, in her better-safe-than-sorry philosophy for governance.

But from out of the blue, in a surprise move which probably awakened all the deadbeats in this cute administration, Gloriaetta said she would not run in 2004.

Nowadays, however, she is getting a lot of encouragement from the most unlikely endorsers of presidential candidates in a Third World country.

They are, according to reports quoting unidentified (i.e. secret) sources, the leaders of the United States, South Korea and Malaysia.

Well, three out of more than a hundred countries on this earth is really not that bad. This country must take note of their endorsement.

For all you know, in a short while, and I won't be surprised either, we are already seeing a groundswell of support of Gloriaetta's candidacy. We heard it all before.

* * *

IT all sounds familiar, because we had the same thing way back in the 1970s and 1980s. For almost two decades, we were treated to the same tactic by the Marcos dictatorship.

You see, it had shades of Imeldific. Remember, former First Lady Imelda Marcos also did not want any government position, not even if you killed her. Sayang!

But she ended up occupying several positions just the same. Well, Ma'am was always forced to bow to the will of the people. You know -- by insistent public demand.

How she and her cohorts found out what the people wanted, remains a mystery to us up to know. The will of the people nevertheless also found its way to media.

After media had to carry the stories on such an insistent public demand quite prominently, Imelda had no choice but to give in to the call of the people.

And so, if you talk to some people in business, all this call for Gloriaetta to make a go for 2004, well, seems to me like a recycled political tactic.

THIS time, however, the groundswell of support comes from people we hardly know. I mean, how many voters really care what Rho thinks. Rho who?

But didn't you notice that all the reports on the "endorsement" of foreign leaders for Gloriaetta's candidacy merely quoted some nameless sources.

In my years in media, when sources do not want to be identified for saying something as flat

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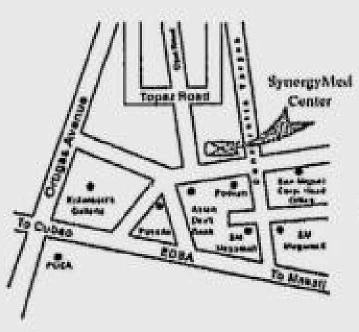

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Excised

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

DO NOT be surprised if you hear Sen. Ralph Recto moping about the automotive excise tax issue.

Despite being the administration senator sponsoring the administration bill, the gentleman from Batangas had been prevailed upon at the 11th hour by Malacañang to instead support the opposition Osmeña version.

According to the grapevine, Recto received a call Thursday afternoon from no less than the President herself while GMA was in Tokyo, asking him to give in to the so-called "Mar Roxas" solution that Sen. Serge Osmeña was pushing.

To make a long story short, the administration/finance department bill that had already been approved by the House was junked and the new Osmeña-Roxas version was passed on second reading before the Senate went into its regular slumber Thursday evening.

Like the Recto/administration bill, the OsRox version would effectively plug the "10-cheater" loophole that enabled Asian utility vehicles sold by Japanese assemblers and sports utility vehicles brought into the country by US and European automotive firms to escape paying excise tax.

However, the OsRox version would effectively impose lower excise tax rates for AUVs and cars selling below P1 million, which is music to the ears of the Japanese lobby, that segment being their main market.

Now, if you believe the official grapevine, the US embassy is threatening to do a Tojiro Takano since the bulk of US vehicles sold here, save for a few Ford Lynx units, are in the luxury/SUV categories, whose proposed excise tax imposition on SUVs would have been offset by lower tax rates for luxury cars under the original administration/DOF/Recto bill.

According to the grapevine, Roxas, and for that matter Malacañang, caved in to the Japanese lobby since the trade secretary was promised billions in investments and thousands of jobs in return.

The good news is that, either way, the OsRox or the Recto/House version would have resulted in higher revenues for the cash-strapped Department of Finance.

In any case, all is not lost for the US/European lobby since the Senate and the House versions of the bill will now be forwarded to the real Congress, the bilateral conference committee, where it is possible that the unified bill could sport an entirely different set of stripes from the two existing versions.

And for the consumers, what this means is that, with the finance department suspending the revenue regulation on the "10-cheater" rule (in fairness to Honda's CR-V, all AUVs now sold locally also fail to meet the new 10-seating rule) until the final excise tax bill is passed and signed into law, you have another two to three months to buy AUVs at the present, lower prices.

And for those who have the cash, the odds are in favor of SUV/luxury car prices to go even higher, now that the House/Recto version has been shot down in the Senate.

Which means that the red Ferrari Modena now on display at the new Ferrari showroom in Ortigas is, at P22 million all in, still trading at a discount.

Maximum animosity

THE NEWSPAPER of our Favorite Publisher will hold a board meeting tomorrow, where the two young brothers who represent the biggest shareholding bloc will try to prevail on Favorite Publisher to reconsider his decision to fire society columnist Maurice Arcache.

But if you believe the grapevine, Arcache is already past tense in the paper, considering that Favorite Publisher would not even answer or return Arcache's phone calls.

Arcache, whose knowledge of Favorite Publisher's personal affairs is said to be voluminous, is apparently resigned to the fact that, notwithstanding his popular support within the newsroom, he will just have to go.

Heard through the grapevine

A HIGH-PROFILE government official is in the doghouse after he cut down a tree blocking the driveway of their Forbes residence that he is renovating while his staunchly pro-environment wife, another government official, was abroad.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

BSP considers lowering bank reserve requirement

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas might loosen its grip on liquidity through a reduction in the reserve requirement on banks if the downtrend in inflation would continue over the next few months, monetary officials said.

A one-percentage point reduction in the reserve requirement was among the options discussed by the advisory council of the Monetary Board last week prior to its monthly monetary policy-setting meeting.

The BSP imposes a total of 17-percent reserve requirement on banks' deposits and deposit substitute liabilities, common trust funds and other fiduciary liabilities. Of the total, 9 percent is the statutory reserve (or those required to be placed in the BSP's vaults) while 8 percent is the liquidity reserve which can be placed in market-yielding instruments purchased from the central bank.

Ahead of the expected reduction in key policy rates by the US Federal Reserve and the European monetary authority, the MB agreed on Thursday to restore a tiering scheme on its overnight borrowing that seeks to discourage banks from parking their funds with the BSP.

The decision came after the National Statistics Office announced a slowdown in the country's inflation rate for May to 2.7 percent from 2.8 percent in April.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura, who chairs the MB's advisory council, confirmed that the one-percentage point cut in reserves was among the options currently being considered by the monetary institution.

A reduction in either the statutory or liquidity reserves, he said, would depend on the need to generate the liquidity needed to fuel the economy.

"But it's not the only option," Buenaventura said in an interview. "A lot of it depends on money supply."

Buenaventura said any new initiative on the reserve requirement would not be dependent on the US Federal Reserve, which is expected to cut its policy rates by 50 basis points later this month.

The European monetary authority likewise cut its policy rate by 50 basis points last June 5.

For its part, the BSP maintained its overnight borrowing rate at 7 percent and its overnight lending rate at 9.25 percent—unchanged over the last 15 months—while the easing was done through the revival of the tiering system.

The restoration of the tiering system, however, makes it less attractive for banks to place funds with the BSP as the published overnight borrowing rate of 7 percent under the overnight reverse repurchase agreement (RRP) window will be applicable only to the first P5 billion parked with the BSP.

In excess of P5 billion, banks will be paid only 4 percent while in excess of P10 billion, the applicable rate will be reduced to one percent.

Electronics to grow 10%

ELECTRONICS exports are expected to grow 10 percent in 2003 from a year earlier to $26 billion despite a decline in global demand for microchips and wireless products, an industry grouping said Saturday.

The semiconductor and electronics data processing sectors, the two major electronics exports segments, however, "are experiencing difficult times," the Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines (SEIPI) said.

Semiconductors, which account for 71 percent of total Philippine electronics exports, recorded a mere 2.16-percent growth in April from a year ago. AFP

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BSP seeks blacklisting of abusive bank clients

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas plans to compel commercial banks to blacklist clients who may be using peso-dollar forward contracts for speculative purposes.

In an interview, BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said the BSP had proposed to the Bankers Association of the Philippines (BAP) this blocking mechanism against abusive clients.

"The proposed mechanism is intended for those resorting to undocumented forwards and those entering into forwards and then canceling them later on," Reyes said.

A forward contract, a derivatives instrument, refers to an agreement to buy and sell a certain amount of goods (such as currency) at a specific price for settlement at a future date.

Since banks directly deal with the client, they are the ones who will have to blacklist the abusive clients. The BSP, however, plans to map out its own check-and-balance system to make sure that the banks will not treat such clients with kid gloves.

"They submit to us a list of cancelled forwards every week. We will maintain a master list of cancellations," Reyes said.

Stripping a bank of its license to sell forwards if found tolerating clients' abuses, Reyes said, would only be done in extreme cases.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said last week the institution was readying stiff sanctions against banks and companies caught using forward contracts for speculative attacks on the local currency.

The BSP's supervision and examination sector which is headed by Reyes and the BAP are now working on a new set of guidelines to govern forward contracts, which should be ready in the next 30 days.

Until a fool-proof set of guidelines were ready, he said the BSP would not lift the six-month restriction on the maturity of forward contracts.

"We are still talking to the BAP to come up with the mechanics that will ensure that this (forward contract) is really used for legitimate hedging of legitimate obligations and not used for speculative purposes," Buenaventura said.

Business wants say in trade talks

By Michelle V. Remo

THE FEDERATION of Philippine Industries (FPI) has renewed its call for the government to give more room for private sector involvement in matters concerning the country's participation in international trade.

Joseph Francia, FPI secretary general, said the organization had recommended amendments to Senate Bill 194, or the bill seeking the creation of the Office of the Trade Representative, in order to allow the country's industries to have a say on government decisions that would directly affect business.

In a letter to Sen. Robert Jaworski, chair of the Senate committee on trade and industry, the FPI said the would-be Philippine Trade Representative should seek advice from private sector representatives on matters concerning the negotiations of bilateral or multilateral trade agreements and on the administration of trade policies in the country.

The proposed Philippine Trade Representative Office will coordinate all government policies, positions and measures with respect to international trade and negotiations.

"However, we wish to emphasize that the quality of negotiating positions is only as good as the degree of collaboration between our government trade negotiators and the private sector," said FPI chair Meneleo Carlos Jr. in the letter to the senator.

The FPI also wants the bill to include a provision establishing an advisory committee for trade policy and negotiations, which will be made up of representatives from various sectors including industry, agriculture, labor, small businesses, service industries, retailers and consumers.

Committee members would be tasked to accompany the Philippine delegation to international trade talks.

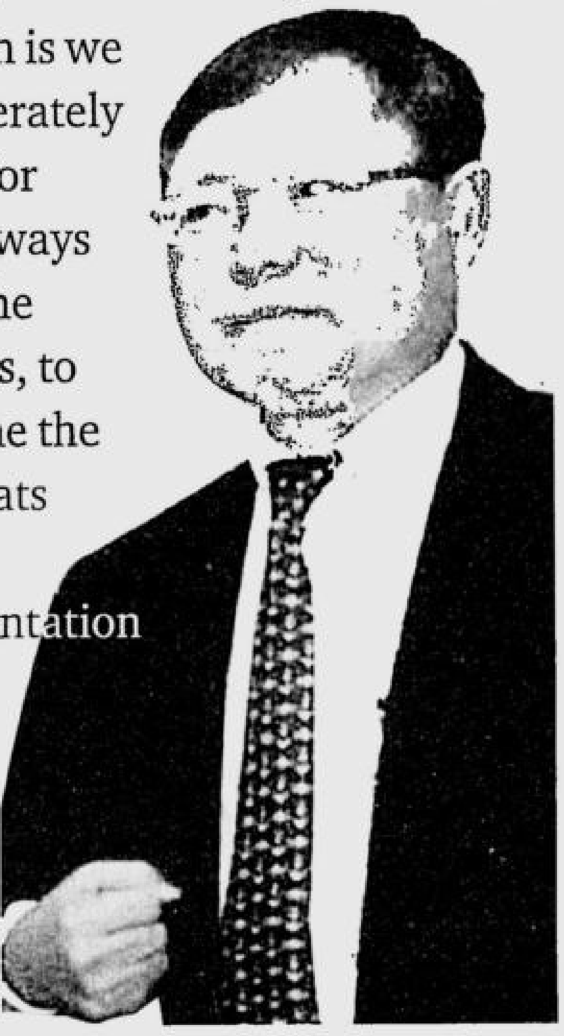
"The reason businesses in the country do not reap much benefits from international trade talks is because the government does not consult the private sector in deciding what policies to push," said Francia in an interview.

He said the private sector should not be locked out in international trade talks because they were the ones who know what policies that would best benefit the country's businesses.

Francia said the FPI was hoping the Senate would consider the proposed amendments.

BIR: Meeting the challenges posed by VAT imposition on banks

'The truth is we are desperately looking for possible ways to plug the loopholes, to determine the real threats to the implementation of VAT.'


BETOY JOHNSON

PARAYNO

TAXMAN Guillermo Parayno Jr. is reinventing the image of the Bureau of Internal Revenue amid continued doubts that the government's biggest revenue collector, accounting for more than 70 percent of the country's annual state income, could pull through and deliver.

Caught between the complaining banks and angry borrowers on the issue of the 10-percent value-added tax, Parayno said he was not a policy-maker but a mere enforcer and that this task he had been taking very seriously since he was appointed BIR chief in August 2002.

The 10-percent VAT was imposed on professionals and financial institutions after their six-year exemption that finally ended in December 2002.

Congress was unable to extend the exemption after the finance department lobbied against sparing the professionals from the VAT again saying this sector could give the BIR additional revenue of P8.6 billion yearly.

The finance department said it would not compromise the ease of continuing with the gross receipts tax if the banks' continued exemption from the VAT would also be extended to professionals.

Parayno said he would implement the 10-percent VAT on financial institutions without reservation even if he personally believed that the 5-percent GRT was more efficient and effective.

In an interview with the INQUIRER*'s Clarissa S. Batino and Michelle V. Remo, Parayno discussed his agency's experience in the initial months of the implementation of VAT on banks and other financial institutions.*

Q & A

Excepts from the interview:

Question: What are the developments on the imposition of VAT on banks and professionals? What are the common issues raised against this tax system?

Answer: There are current moves in Congress to bring back banks and other financial institutions under the gross receipt tax (GRT) system from the present VAT system.

One of the issues being raised against the imposition of VAT on financial institutions is that Revenue Regulation 12-2003, which mandated banks to pay the VAT in lieu of the GRT, was only issued in March but collections covered even the first two months of the year. Some are saying that it is not appropriate to collect the VAT for the period prior to the issuance of the revenue regulation.

In response to that argument, I tell them that what we issued in March, RR 12-2003, is already an amendment of RR 18-1999, which was the IRR (implementing rules and regulations) governing the imposition of VAT on banks. This means that as early as 1999, there was already an IRR, and as such, one cannot say that the BIR can't implement the imposition of VAT beginning Jan 1, 2003.

Q: There are comments that VAT is a complicated system to implement. Do you believe so?

A: I agree that there are really certain matters regarding VAT that need to be clarified .

There was a suggestion for banks to just absorb the VAT for the period covering January to March, or until such time that they are able to put in place their IT systems. This is because the implementation of VAT requires issuance of receipts. Receipts should be issued under the VAT system so that those who will pay the VAT could make use of the receipts to claim for input credits if they were VAT registered.

But the problem is that many of the banks have not yet made the necessary adjustments in their computer systems. Others do not even have computer systems to adjust which means they have to issue invoices manually. Considering the voluminous invoices that have to be issued, these banks will need to hire so many people just to issue and document receipts, which may cost them so much money in the long run.

As a tradeoff, however, the banks are requesting that they be allowed to expense the VAT that they assumed for income tax purposes.

Q: Is the BIR willing to consider the request of banks to be allowed to deduct the 10-percent VAT that they will absorb from their income tax?

A: We tried to make our own calculations and we (the BIR) are, in fact, amenable to their request. We calculated that the government would be better off insofar as the transactions of VAT-registered bank clients are concerned. The government will not be in the losing end in that arrangement.

Q: How can you say that such a proposal would be beneficial for the government?

A: Part of our assumption is that since banks will assume the VAT, they will not issue receipts to clients. In return, the clients cannot claim input VAT credits from the government. This means that the 10-percent VAT to be collected by the government will be intact since no bank client will claim credits.

But since VAT payments will have to be expensed or deducted from the income tax, the government will get a net incremental tax of 6.8 percent.

The figure was arrived at by subtracting the 3.2-percent tax component from the 10-percent VAT that they (banks) will assume.

It is really very difficult to determine whether the BIR will win or lose in agreeing to the proposal. We will gain from VAT-registered clients, but will lose from those that are not. On the whole, are we better off or worse off? To know the answer to that means going into the profile of the banks' customers.

When we checked on the BSP website, we saw that 40 percent of the banks' clients are individuals and 60 percent are corporations. Out of the 40 percent individuals, some are VAT-registered and some are not. The problem is we really don't know if in the end, when we put all these together, the BIR will be better off or worse off in terms of the amount of collections.

Q: How then do you intend to solve the problem?

A: With this question in mind, I am inclined to meet with the banks and propose to them that they assume and deduct from their income tax the 10-percent VAT only from VAT-registered clients. For non-VAT clients, I will propose that they merely assume and not deduct the 10-percent VAT. If they will agree to my proposal, then we can simplify the whole thing.

Q: Will this cover only the first quarter?

A: This proposal is intended for application during the whole transition period or until they are able to establish appropriate IT systems to implement the VAT.

We think that this is a win-win solution for the banks because they will no longer have to hire more people to issue so many receipts.

Q: Considering that VAT is believed to be a more complicated system than the GRT, are you proposing for the return of the banking sector to the old system?

A: As an official of the BIR, I am assuming that nothing will happen in the days to come that will reverse the ruling on the implementation of the VAT system. I am inclined to believe that there will not be a return to the GRT system. I also don't think Congress will be able to pass a bill shifting or returning to the GRT system.

Whatever my opinion is with regard to which is the better tax system is already a foregone conclusion. I might as well accept in my mind that VAT is already the tax system that should be imposed. If I will be half-hearted in implementing the VAT, the collections of the BIR might be affected.

Q: But personally, what do you think is the better system?

A: I would go along with the position of the department (Department of Finance) that keeping the banks and other financial institutions under the GRT system is the better thing to do.

Q: Why is that so?

A: Because putting the banks under the VAT system is really a very complex process. It needs a very good system to implement if you don't want to have any leakage.

Q: How do you address the strong opposition, particularly from end-users and small borrowers, to the VAT imposition?

A: I think market forces will ultimately bring back the cost of borrowing to their correct levels. VAT becomes prohibitive only because there are some who pass on the entire 10 percent to the end-users. It is, however, understandable that banks find it very difficult to implement the VAT system perfectly without a good system that will enable them to price their loans and services. It's really very difficult to determine how to price those services since interest rates change by the day and by the hour. One can impose prices over a period of time, but if the pricing does not prove to be right, then the bank will lose in the end.

This means that it's really a matter of time before the kind of mechanism needed to perfect the VAT system can be put in place. But then, we will go back to a situation where market forces will drive the cost of these products down, then the banks will eventually just pass on to its clients only a portion of the VAT and not the whole thing.

But as it is right now and the way I see it, banks are still having a difficult time pricing their products and services with the VAT system.

Q: But there is such a thing as presumptive cost? Is this still being followed?

A: The RR 18-1999 had the provision on presumptive cost, but after discussions with my staff and with the DOF, we agreed that there was no legal justification for a presumptive cost.

Q: Considering the complexities the imposition of VAT entails, why was it applied in the first place?

A: I was able to talk with people who worked on the whole expanded VAT process prior to 1994. From what I understand, the Senate decision to impose VAT on financial institutions was due to the perception that banks were not being taxed enough compared with other sectors. On that basis, according to the information relayed to me, the VAT on banks and financial institutions was imposed.

I believe that when the decision was made, there was no consideration of the administrative nightmare that will arise from its implementation.

Q: If it turns out that there will only be a minimal increase, or a decline, in revenue collection under the VAT system, won't the BIR propose the return to GRT?

A: We are analyzing on a month-on-month basis the impact of the VAT imposition. We have figures on the tax declarations for January, February and March, and payments figures for February and March and April. By just looking at the figures, we can say that the BIR collected a lot more under the VAT system.

Figures show that the February collection in 2002 was higher than that in February 2003, collections were still based on the GRT system. Likewise, March 2002 collections were higher than that of March 2003, whose collections were also based on the GRT system.

But for April 2003, when VAT was already imposed, our collection was really much higher than our April (2002) collections under GRT. If you look at the absolute figures, you will see that VAT collections are indeed much higher.

Q: But does your computation consider the amount of input VAT credits that will be claimed later on?

A: Of course, we have to consider the fact that the BIR will be issuing input credits but the extent of the effect of input credit claims on the actual collection has yet to be analyzed.

Q: The Bankers Association of the Philippines is saying that the government stands to lose in this setup. What if the banks are right?

A: Again, 60 percent of the banks' clients are corporate and 40 percent are individuals. The whole 60 percent is definitely VAT-registered, but a portion of the 40 percent individual clients are non-VAT and another portion is VAT-registered.

I don't really know how many of the 40 percent individual clients are VAT-registered and how many are non-VAT, but for the VAT-registered clients, it's going to be a wash transaction. The non-VAT clients are the ones from whom the BIR will get the whole 10 percent (since they cannot claim input VAT credits).

However, how much is the whole VAT collection, taking into consideration the leakage through spurious input VAT credit claims, is yet to be determined.

There is one problem with regard to VAT: Some claims of input credits are suspected to be excessive.

When bankers say that the government is going to lose under the VAT system, I think what they are really saying is that the government will lose on people who claim input credits that are not for real. The question is do we have a good system to check suspicious claims?

Q: DOF estimated that leakage from VAT could amount to P50 billion to P70 billion a year. What is the BIR doing about this?

A: We are trying to put in place the right auditing system. Recently the BIR has come up with the so-called Relief (reconciliation of listings for enforcement) auditing system. With this system, we are beginning to have some protection against tax leakage. The Relief system is capable of determining the accuracy of the income tax paid by matching tax declarations with summary lists of sales and purchases from third-party sources.

But there is also a report that many industries claimed excessive input VAT credits, and this calls for the BIR to come up with an auditing system specifically for this.

The Relief system is a way of checking gross receipts that are subject to VAT, and not a way of checking claims of input VAT. Now that there are well-documented studies showing unreasonably high claims of input VAT credits, another auditing system should be put in place.

Q: What were the industries that were allegedly claiming excessive input VAT credits?

A: There are a number of industries cited, including cement, sugar, soft drinks and telecommunication.

So that is the problem of VAT in general. If only we can have a good audit system to identify excessive input claims, it will be a very good system.

Q: What can you say about complaints against VAT coming from the housing sector?

A: What they are saying is that if you impose VAT, people will not borrow money to build homes. This means that no interest charges will be collected and, on top of that, there will also be no VAT collection.

So that is what they are really saying—that the government, instead of collecting more revenue from VAT on banks, will instead lose because its collection will be affected by the fact that there will be a reduced number of clients to seek bank loans due to the VAT.

But what can I really do about this? Remember, I am not the policy maker, I'm just an administrator and I just implement what has been made as policy.

Q: What is the biggest problem you foresee with regard to imposing VAT in lieu of the GRT?

A: One big problem we are facing now is the transactions of BOI (Board of Investments)—and Peza (Philippine Economic Zone Authority)—registered enterprises which were able to obtain exemptions from paying the VAT.

Since they are zero-rated, they are not paying VAT whenever they make a loan or avail themselves of the services of banks.

The thing is that the banks used to collect GRT from them so the government was generating revenue from the banks' transactions with these enterprises.

Now that the GRT was removed, there arises a real possibility of loss on the part of the government.

We are worried that some locators who have companies outside the bonded areas will now course all of their transactions to their zero-rated offices to avoid paying the VAT. This means that instead of the BIR collecting VAT from companies outside the customs territory and that are connected with Peza locators, they will all be exempt from paying the VAT. This will really hurt our collection.

So what the BIR is saying is that only business-related activities of these enterprises should be considered tax-exempt. So we're now looking at a possible amendment to revenue memorandum circular 74-99 (which gives zero rating to these enterprises) so that the zero-rating only applies to the registered business activity. This clarification should be strictly made because if not, there will be a real minus for the government.

Q: As a whole, would you say that VAT would really generate more revenue for the government than that from the GRT?

A: Again, it depends on our ability to contain probable leakages. The truth is we are desperately looking for possible solutions to plug the loopholes, to determine the real threats to the implementation of VAT. We are coming up with ways to confront those threats.

Asean countries at odds over tariff rates on Aico products

ASEAN countries are sharply divided on a proposal to grant duty-free privilege to products coursed through the Asean Industrial Cooperation (Aico), a production-sharing scheme between companies operating in the region.

A government source said member-countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations have yet to agree on the uniform duty that would be imposed on all Aico projects up to 2010.

The source said that while Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore had agreed to a zero tariff for Aico products, Thailand had set a maximum Aico rate of 3 percent while the Philippines wanted the rate pegged at 1 percent.

The unequal tax rates have led some countries to demand full reciprocity such that since they grant duty-free access to Aico imports, their Aico exports should also get the same tariff rate.

The differences over the Aico rates have put to question the sustainability of the industrial cooperation plan which was designed as a precursor to the formation of a regional trading block by granting preferred duties of 0 to 5 percent on covered products.

But with the start of the Asean Free Trade Area, where the common effective preferential tariff rate was set at 5 percent and below, Asean members felt there was a need to adopt zero duties in Aico to make the project relevant.

Aico began in the late 1980s as Asean Industrial Joint Venture and Brand-to-Brand Complementation as means to attract multinational corporations to locate their production facilities in the region. The plan allows MNCs to take advantage of the cost advantages in each member country to sell its products throughout Asean at preferential tariff rates.

The Philippines has 23 Aico projects, of which only 13 have been approved. These include projects of Toyota Motor Co., Honda Motor Co. , Honda, Mitsubishi Motor Co., Nestlé, Matsushita Electric Philippines Inc. and Republic Glass Asahi Inc. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

RP pursues plan to raise tariffs on sugar imports

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE GOVERNMENT will go ahead with its plan to bring up to the World Trade Organization its plea to raise the tariff rates on sugar even if it has yet to secure the consent of Thailand, one of the biggest sugar producers in the region, to the continued protection of the Philippine sugar industry.

A government source said the Philippines could not wait for Thailand's formal acceptance of the settlement offer because it has to submit its application to raise the bound rate or maximum duty on sugar from 65 percent to 80 percent for the next 10 years before next month, when the duty on the sweetener was expected to fall to 50 percent.

The President can only make tariff changes via executive fiat when Congress is in recess (sessions will resume on July 28).

The Philippines had already obtained Thailand's nod to move sugar into the sensitive list of agriculture products and defer the reduction of its duties from a range of 50 percent to 65 percent to 5 percent under the Asean Free Trade Area.

In exchange, the Philippines agreed to import a minimum of 200,000 metric tons of rice yearly from Thailand which would cover roughly 20 percent of the country's projected 1 million rice imports next year. The 5-year Thai rice import package would be bought at world market prices.

However, it has yet to get Thailand's support for its WTO bid which would affect most-favored nation tariffs or duties imposed on products of non-Asean countries such as major sugar producers Australia and Brazil. Both countries are expected to oppose the higher duties on sugar being imported by the Philippines.

By raising the bound rate, the Philippines does not have to reduce the tariff on sugar to a maximum of 50 percent by next year. It means it can keep the sugar tariffs at 65 percent up to 2010.

Meralco now charges 10¢/kWh in PPA

By Ronnel W. Domingo

MANILA Electric Co. has started imposing another 1.27 centavos per kilowatt hour on its customers following the Energy Regulatory Commission's decision allowing the utility to recover over the next three years some P834.5 million in deferred purchased power adjustment (PPA) representing transmission line fees paid for by Meralco earlier.

This brought to 10 centavos per kilowatt hour the total PPA charges imposed by Meralco on its customers. In a two-page order dated May 29, the ERC said Meralco was authorized to collect 1.27 centavos per kWh effective this month to recover the amount.

The 1.27-centavo was added to the 8.75-centavo per kWh hour that the utility had started collecting last April for the recovery of P5.76 billion in PPA.

The P5.76 billion in deferred PPA accounted for the cost of electricity bought from independent power producers while the additional P834.5 million covered the transmission line fees that Meralco had paid for to have its supply delivered.

The distribution giant had originally asked for the recovery of P1.5 billion for transmission costs.

But the ERC ruled that Meralco's contract with Quezon Power Philippines Ltd. allowed the recovery of only 54 percent of what the utility was asking for.

In an interview, an official from Meralco's utility economics division said the 10-centavo deferred PPA was already included in the P3.40-per-kWh "generation charge" item in the bills that Meralco customers would receive this month.

In an interview last week, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan spokesperson Renato Reyes Jr. said the term "PPA" may no longer be in Meralco's new unbundled bill, but that this was broken up and included in several fees.

"The PPA accounted for generation charges, systems losses and franchise tax—all of which appear in the new billing scheme," Reyes said. "We are still paying for electricity that we did not use."

Meralco collects the PPA to pay for electricity bought from independent power producers (IPPs), whose contracts consumer groups decry as onerous and disadvantageous to the government.

National Power Corp.'s deals with IPPs include "take-or-pay" provisions, which means that a certain amount of electricity should be paid whether or not this was generated.

The never ending Moro tragedy

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

THROUGHOUT the Philippine recorded history, the Moro proved, time and again, that he was capable of outstanding feats of enterprise and bravery.

Twice a year, when the wind was right, and for almost three centuries during the Spanish regime, fleets of as many as one hundred *vintas* sailed out of Jolo. Navigating by the stars, these voyages brought the intrepid Moro around the Philippine and Indonesian archipelagos. Sometimes, they reached the Indian Ocean, other times as far south as Papua New Guinea.

If the Moro was engaged in legitimate trade and commerce, Jolo today might be a trade hub like Singapore. But the voyages were not trading missions. They were out to loot, pillage and plunder. For example, they would land in Albay to claim the annual rice harvest from the rich Bicol valley.

But the main mission of the voyages was to capture natives to be sold in the slave market in Jolo. An adult male fetched P40; an adult female, P20, and a child, P10. Sometimes, after a slave raid, the ravaged community simply disappeared from the map. The shores of our archipelago are still dotted with stone watchtowers—mute witnesses to that terrible era.

Jolo was a slave state. It is estimated that 300,000 slaves were sold in Jolo. Every household had slaves to do housework, tend to the fish pens and till the rice fields. Slaves ran the family business, and, for this purpose, a Tagalog was supposed to be the best. On a raid, slaves were used as weapon carriers.

The raids were state-run joint ventures. The sultan provided the boats and weapons, a labor contractor, and the men. The proceeds were divvied up according to a pre-agreed schedule.

Slave trading was highly profitable. Even when the colonial government introduced the *canonero*, a steamboat with deck guns, in mid-1800s, the raids went on. The slave trade finally ended in 1903 when General Pershing declared slavery illegal. He freed the slaves and closed down the Jolo market.

Spoiled by a slave culture, the Moro lost his appetite for hard work. Today, a century later, he is still seen as a lazy and inept farmer or a double-dealing peddler. He also remains uninsurable. Life insurance companies do not insure people who have no birth certificates issued by the civil registrar, and no written marriage contracts.

During the 10-year pacification campaign waged by Pershing from 1903, the Moro engaged the Americans, and later the American-led Philippine Scouts, in numerous battles. The Moro lost all those bloody battles.

But Pershing wrote, "They are absolutely fearless, and once committed to combat, they count death as a mere incident."

Finally, in 1913, the Moro made his last major stand in Mount Bagsak, Sulu. When the Datu knew the battle was already lost, he ordered his gallant men to put on their best clothes. Everybody was to die well dressed.

Pershing, who personally led his forces, wrote later in his official report, "let us not forget the vanquished foe ... He fought with an unswerving courage and a superb gallantry that was the admiration of all. Let our assurances of good will be extended to him in his defeat, and let no opportunity be allowed to pass by to do a kindly act, or to extend a word of encouragement to this brave people."

But the bravery and gallantry were misplaced. Throughout the campaign, the Moro always fought for his datu, not for a higher purpose such as freedom and liberty. Also, the datus never trusted each other. They never banded together to present a stronger front against the Americans.

It was not until the 1970s when Nur Misuari, with his Bangsa Moro battle cry, was able to pull the major tribes together. But, when he became the governor of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), he spent his time enjoying the trappings of a potentate. Now he is in jail, on trial for rebellion.

The Moro continues to fight, as a kidnapper in Sulu, and as a rebel in Cotabato out to carve an independent state, which is nothing but a pipe dream. This is the never-ending tragedy of these enterprising and brave people.

AYALA LIFE FIXED INCOME FUND, INC.
Notice of Annual Meeting of Stockholders

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of Ayala Life Fixed Income Fund ("ALFM") will be held on Monday, June 16, 2003, at 3:00 p.m. at the Ballroom III of Dusit Hotel Nikko, Makati City for the transaction of the following business:

1. Calling of meeting to order
2. Certification of Notice
3. Determination and Declaration of Quorum
4. Reading and approval of the minutes of the Annual Stockholders Meeting held on May 21, 2002.
5. Presentation and approval of the Annual Report and other reports of the Investment Manager
6. Approval and confirmation of all acts of the Board of Directors and of Management
7. Election of Directors
8. Confirmation of BPI Asset Management as Investment Manager (continuing term unless expressly terminated)
9. Appointment of External Auditors
10. Other Business
    - Increase in total management and administration / distribution fee to 1.5% p.a.
    - Increase in compensation of the Board of Directors and Officers to P10,000.00
11. Adjournment

Only stockholders of record at the close of business on May 8, 2003, the record date and time fixed by the Board of Directors, are entitled to notice of, and to vote at said meeting.

For your convenience, admission to the meeting will be by identification cards only. If you are a stockholder of record and plan to attend, please bring the Voting Ticket attached. The Voting ticket will admit you to the meeting.

In order that your stock may be represented at the meeting in case you are not personally present, please complete, sign and date the enclosed Voting Ticket and return it promptly to the Office of the Corporate Secretary, 17th Floor, BPI Building, Ayala Avenue corner Paseo de Roxas St., Makati City.

By order of the Board of Directors,

SABINO PADILLA IV
Corporate Secretary

This announcement appears as a matter of record only

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ALABANG "B"	1.6M	PUNTA FUEGO	550K	CANLUBANG	450K
BAGUIO CC	700K	QC SPORTS "A"	200K	CC @ TAG	350K
CALATAGAN "A"	80K	RIVIERA "A"	Call now	CLUB FILIPINO	140K
CELEB (CORP)	Call now	S'WOODS "A"	510K	FOREST HILLS "A"	150K
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MLA POLO	2.5M	TAG HLANDS	Call now	STA ELENA "A"	1.35M
MIMOSA (CORP)	270K	TAG MIDLANDS	700K	VALLEY GOLF	270K

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MLA SOUTHWOODS	45,000	WACK WACK	90,000

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BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	please call	600K
CALATAGAN GOLF CLUB "A"	60K	-
CANYON WOODS	-	125K
CAPITOL HILLS GOLF CLUB	-	130K
FONTANA "D"	50K	-
FOREST HILLS "A"	-	155K
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	-	210K
MANILA GOLF CLUB (Ind.)	please call	10.2M
MANILA GOLF CLUB (Corp.)	11M	-
MANILA POLO CLUB	2.250M	-
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	470K	-
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "B"	600K	-
METRO CLUB	-	90K
MONTEMAR BEACH CLUB	-	30K
PUERTO AZUL BEACH CLUB	-	85K
ROYALE TAGAYTAY	-	please call
SHERWOOD HILLS "B"	130K	-
SHERWOOD HILLS "C"	100k	-
SPA & LODGE	-	700K
STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "B"	please call	1.4M
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	please call	-
VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	-	250K
WACK WACK GOLF CLUB	6.350M	-

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G & W clubshares
SEC License Broker No.: A-17597
As of June 9, 2003

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A	1,270,000	-
Baguio Country Club	650,000	580,000
Camp John Hay	220,000	Pls. Call
Canyon Woods	160,000	Pls. Call
Capitol Hills	-	110,000
Calatagan Golf Club A/B**	70,000/Pls. Call	-
Celebrity Sports Club	180,000	150,000
Club Filipino	-	130,000
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	270,000/450,000**	220,000
Eastridge B	130,000	-
Evercrest	100,000	-
Fontana D/C*/A**	70,000/140,000*/230,000**	-
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	220,000*/250,000**	175,000
Manila Golf Ind./Corp.*	-	11,000,000*
Manila Polo	2,500,000	-
Makati Sports Club A/B*	-	200,000
Manila Yacht Club	550,000	-
Manila Southwoods A/B*	540,000	450,000
Metropolitan Club	100,000	90,000
Mimosa Golf Ind./Corp.*	-	95,000/200,000*
Mt. Malarayat Ind./Corp.*	270,000	-
Orchard Golf A/B*	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Phil. Columbian	-	-
Puerto Azul A/B	100,000/150,000*	-
Punta Fuego	500,000	400,000
Quezon City Sports Club A	320,000	-
Riviera Golf A/C*	380,000*	-
Royale Tagaytay A/C*	Pls. Call*	-
Sherwoods A/B*/C**	50,000/Pls. Call*	76,000**
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	-	1,400,000
Subic Bay Yacht Club (Corp.)	160,000	-
Spa & Lodge	700,000	-
Subic Golf	Pls. Call	-
Tagaytay Highlands Golf & CC	600,000	700,000
Tagaytay Midlands	700,000	-
Valley Golf & CC	300,000	250,000
Valle Verde (Indv.)	160,000	-
Wack Wack Golf	8,000,000	-

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SEC License Broker #007575 * As of June 6, 2003

CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,200,000	1,300,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	-	1,500,000
Baguio Country Club	620,000	750,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	-	70,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	80,000
Camp John Hay	-	230,000
Canlubang	450,000	550,000
Canyonwoods	-	150,000
Capitol Hills	135,000	160,000
Cebu Country Club	Please Call	-
Celebrity Sports Club	170,000	180,000
Club Filipino	110,000	150,000
Evercrest "A"	-	80,000
Fontana "A"	-	200,000
Forest Hills "A"	160,000	200,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	200,000
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	250,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	230,000	300,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	11,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,100,000	10,600,000
Manila Polo	-	2,300,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	Please Call	500,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	600,000
Manila Yacht Club	-	500,000
Metropolitan Club "A"	90,000	135,000
Mimosa (Individual)	-	120,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	-	300,000
Montemar (Individual)	40,000	-
Montemar (Corporate)	70,000	-
Mt. Malarayat (Individual)	-	270,000
Puerto Azul	-	100,000
Quezon City Sports Club	160,000	200,000
Rockwell	-	380,000
Royale Tagaytay "A"	-	Please Call
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	90,000
Sherwood Hills "B"	-	180,000
Sherwood Hills "C"	-	200,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,250,000	1,500,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,600,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	280,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	380,000	430,000
Tagaytay Highlands	700,000	800,000
Tagaytay Midlands	680,000	745,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	100,000	165,000
Valley Golf	280,000	300,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,300,000	6,600,000

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SEC finds trading violations on WG&A

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission's compliance and enforcement department (CED) has found that some brokers had engaged in wash sales and violated the country's securities rules in relation to the trading of shares of shipping firm WG&A Inc. last year.

A document from the SEC showed that the CED had identified and placed on a shortlist the brokers and corresponding violations for transactions covering July 1 to Aug. 2, 2002. The brokers, however, were not named in the document.

The identified violations were those related to wash sale, customer account information forms or CAIF, order ticket, and confirmation of purchases and sales.

Wash sales are unlawful transactions wherein a person, directly or indirectly, effects a transaction in a security that involves no change in beneficial ownership, giving the appearance of active trading of a security.

The SEC document also stated that the CAIF of a Josephine Goangco was requested "as she was identified to have been the beneficial (sic) of a large transaction earlier attributed to an officer of WG&A."

The CED also plans to call up for clarification the identified beneficial owners whose transactions were large.

Last year, SEC Chair Lilia Bautista said the corporate watchdog would look into possible insider trading of shares of WG&A before the disclosure of an agreement for the Aboitiz group to buy the shares of the Chiongbian and Gothong groups in the shipping company.

Analyst Astro del Castillo of A&A Securities and spokesperson of the Analysts Securities Association of the Philippines had sought a probe of the unusual trading of WG&A shares.

Trading of WG&A shares was minimal until July 25. From that day until Aug. 1, the day of the disclosure, a total of 814,455 WG&A shares changed hands at an average weighted value of P3.344 per share.

After opening at P1.70 per share on July 25, the price of WG&A shares continued to rise until it reached P3.40 on July 31. On the day of the disclosure, 345,000 shares were traded and the share price rose to P3.60.

WG&A operates roughly two dozen vessels nationwide and is the biggest provider of domestic ferry transportation in terms of both passenger and cargo business.

The Cebu-based firm was formed through a merger in 1996 among William Lines Inc. of the Chiongbians, Carlos Gothong Lines, and Aboitiz Shipping Corp.

AL GENERAL MEETING

MANUEL V. Pangilinan, second from left, and First Pacific directors Ed Tortoricci and Robin Nicholson and CFO Paul Wallace, from left, enjoy a light moment after Pangilinan was appointed CEO of First Pacific and tasked by the board of directors to execute the strategies and plans of the company recently. First Pacific did a turnaround last year posting a $40-million net income on the strength of PLDT's strong performance.

Bangko Sentral OKs guidelines on asset transfers to SPVs

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE POLICY-MAKING Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has approved the guidelines in determining the legitimacy of asset transfers to be undertaken by banks through special asset purpose vehicles (SPVs).

In an interview, BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said this would pave the way for the issuance of a circular detailing the eligibility requirements on banks wishing to unload bad assets through SPVs.

"In the processing of applications, the MB approved the mechanics, including the format for the issuance of the certificate of eligibility, the conditions when the certificate would be issued," Reyes said.

Among the conditions needed to get the MB's approval, Reyes explained, would be the consistent inventory of banks wishing to tap SPVs.

"The assets (to be transferred) must be included in the inventory submitted to the BSP," Reyes said.

He said the BSP's supervision and examination sector would maintain a database of nonperforming loans (NPLs) and real and other properties owned and acquired (ropoas) of banks based on the listing submitted by these banks themselves. This database will be used by the BSP as the basis for validating the banks' requests for asset transfers.

The database will be created from the submission of bad assets of the banking system as of end-June 2002, the cut-off date specified by the SPV law, which took effect early this year.

Under the law, SPVs are entitled to fiscal incentives on the purchase and subsequent use or disposal of banks' ropoas.

Another condition set by the MB would be the submission of evidence that the asset transfer would be done through an outright sale.

Reyes said there might be cases where the proponents would simply make it appear that the transactions would be through a sale/purchase deal with the SPV.

The BSP is set to issue a separate circular to address the accounting treatment of the discount and booking of losses to be absorbed by the banks. The BSP is still discussing the proposed circular with the Bankers Association of the Philippines.

The BAP is open to the proposal to stagger the booking of losses from the sale of bad assets over seven years.

Banks will be paid only 20-30 percent of the value of assets transferred to SPVs while the remaining 70 percent will be paid in long-term securities.

Breaktime

From page B2

tering to Gloriaetta as an endorsement, I get a bit queasy.

Maybe the source came from the opposition. For why would he, she, it or they want to be anonymous? It's not as if they said Gloriaetta is having an affair or something.

Now if it's a feed from the Gloriaetta camp, it has all the trimming of a propaganda line. You know—shades of Imeldific.

You know what, somehow people have the uncanny ability to detect BS in whatever form. I think that is bad for Gloriaetta in the long pull.

The propaganda can backfire, and it can blind those around Gloriaetta. The tactic can somehow make people think of her as a clone of Imelda. Bad politics.

* * *

WHY will anybody want to become the President of the Republic? Well, what else, in order to serve the poor!

The next president can serve the poor by getting all of us deeper and deeper into the debt pit. Like it or not, we are burying ourselves into a mountain of debt.

For that is the real issue in the next elections—the debt problem. How will the next president solve it?

While we were not looking, you see, our national debt—both foreign and local—ballooned to something like P6 trillion.

I repeat—that's the number six with 12 zeroes. It is actually bigger than our yearly GNP. Our debt, in short, is bigger than the economy. Uh-oh.

* * *

AND what is the solution? None of those who are threatening to run in 2004 has ever said a word about it.

It is a debt bomb, and it will explode. It is not a matter of "if." At this point, unless we do something drastic about it, it's just a matter of "when."

By the time this cute administration of Gloriaetta is through with its term, it would have already borrowed more than P1 trillion.

And that, to be fair, is no fault of Gloriaetta's. She inherited a government budget which the administration of Kuya Eddie padded with a lot of recurring expenses.

And how did the Kuya finance them? With non-recurring revenues like proceeds from the bargain sale of government assets such as Petron.

Without any concern for the financing then, now Gloriaetta's boys want to do the same thing. For some more government assets, they want to hold a tiangge.

But it's hard to sell anything with a big price tag nowadays. We have a stock market that's just starting to show signs of life.

The stock market must become active. How do you do that when the SSS and the GSIS remain as the only pension funds in the whole wide world which do not bother with the stock market at all.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of June 6, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.15	4.25	4.15	4.25	15,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	16.5	16.5	16	16.25	120,600
Bank of the Phil. Islands	44	45.5	44	45.5	2,079,600
Citystate Savings Bank	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	32	32	30	30	194,600
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	30.5	30.5	29	29	564,900
Philippine National Bank	23.5	23.5	22.5	22.5	264,300
Phil. Savings Bank	27.5	28	27.5	28	21,700
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12	12	12	12	36,500
Security Bank Corp.	11.25	11.25	10.75	11	287,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	15,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	17,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1525	1525	1525	1525	540
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	60,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1120	1130	1120	1125	3,910
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	15.5	15.5	15	15	34,600
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	1,500,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	615	630	615	625	388,230
Ipeople Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	50,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.041	0.042	0.041	0.042	11,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	2,400,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	10,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3	3.2	3	3.2	107,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.33	0.34	0.32	0.34	8,000,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	10,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	465	465	462.5	462.5	67,200
Ivantage Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	30,000
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	3,600,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	7.2	7.3	7	7.1	1,280,000
Manila Electric Co. B	11.5	11.5	11.25	11.25	1,225,600
Petron Corp.	1.88	1.88	1.8	1.8	3,216,000
Trans-Asia Oil And Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	25,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.55	2.55	2.5	2.5	221,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.48	0.52	0.48	0.52	2,730,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.56	1.58	1.56	1.58	165,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.84	0.89	0.84	0.88	1,270,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	110,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	28.5	29.5	28.5	29.5	91,700
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.5	16.5	16.25	16.5	248,000
RFM Corp.	0.69	0.7	0.69	0.7	110,000
San Miguel Corp. A	54.5	55	54.5	54.5	221,600
San Miguel Corp. B	64	64.5	63.5	64	186,800
Universal Robina Corp.	4.3	4.35	4.3	4.3	70,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	120,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.37	30,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	10,000
Ayala Corp.	4.7	4.75	4.55	4.65	5,569,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	70,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	1,700,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	31,500,000
APC Group Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	400,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	9,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.74	1.74	178,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	20,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.32	0.33	12,890,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	1,500,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.23	0.26	0.23	0.26	7,680,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	8.2	8.3	8.2	8.2	158,000
Ionics Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	250,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.56	1.58	1.56	1.58	37,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.62	0.7	0.62	0.7	11,020,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	40,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.195	0.205	0.195	0.205	3,250,000
Music Corp.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	620,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	0.65	0.7	0.65	0.7	30,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	150,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	30,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	200,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.26	1.28	1.26	1.28	20,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.66	1.72	1.66	1.72	151,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	100,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	16	16	16	16	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.45	2,780,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.32	0.35	0.32	0.34	1,650,000
Mondragon Intl Phils Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.29	0.29	450,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	500,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	15.5	15.5	14.5	14.75	523,100
DMCI Holdings, Inc- Pref.	775	775	775	775	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	2,100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,400
PLDT 10% Pref Series Cc	10	10	10	10	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.7	5.7	5.5	5.7	20,010,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.17	0.18	0.17	0.18	800,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.135	0.14	1,100,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	10,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.19	0.205	0.175	0.205	29,330,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.93	0.95	0.92	0.94	29,820,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.14	2.14	2.14	2.14	100,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.17	0.18	0.17	0.18	1,400,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	100,000
Primex Corp.	3	3	3	3	50,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	73,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	100,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.5	5.6	5.4	5.5	30,980,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1	1	1	1	20,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	600,000
Omico Corp.	0.0042	0.0044	0.004	0.0042	80,000,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	2,700,000
Interport Res. B	0.0028	0.003	0.0028	0.003	6,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	22,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	3,000,000
Pacifica	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	6,000,000
South China Resources Inc	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	10,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	100,000

CURRENCIES

June 6, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.844381	1.000000	53.356000
Japan	Yen	0.007174	0.008496	0.453300
United Kingdom	Pound	1.402685	1.661200	88.635000
Hongkong	Dollar	0.108277	0.128233	6.842000
Switzerland	Franc	0.649423	0.769112	41.036700
Canada	Dollar	0.628914	0.744823	39.740800
Singapore	Dollar	0.491634	0.582242	31.066100
Australia	Dollar	0.563108	0.666889	35.582500
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.239856	2.652661	141.535400
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.225163	0.266660	14.227900
Brunei	Dollar	0.490207	0.580552	30.975900
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000102	0.000121	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.020361	0.024114	1.286600
UAE	Dirham	0.229894	0.272264	14.526900
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.184300	63.189500
Argentina	Peso	0.299426	0.354610	18.920600
Brazil	Real	0.291668	0.345423	18.430400
Denmark	Kroner	0.134670	0.159490	8.509700
India	Rupee	0.018066	0.021395	1.141600
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.222235	0.263193	14.042900
Mexico	New Peso	0.080192	0.094971	5.067300
New Zealand	Dollar	0.490491	0.580889	30.993900
Norway	Kroner	0.122887	0.145535	7.765200
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014659	0.017361	0.926300
South Africa	Rand	0.106546	0.126183	6.732600
Korea	Won	0.000703	0.000833	0.044400
Sweden	Kroner	0.109661	0.129872	6.929500
Syria	Pound	0.020105	0.023810	1.270400
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024418	0.028918	1.542900
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000529	0.000627	0.033500

Stock rebound . . .

From page B1

expected with initial support at 1,137 then 1,100.

"Market dips would present opportunities to renew, accumulate," the bank unit said.

However, both BPI Trade and Vistan warned of caution.

"The market clearly is pricing in a major economic rebound, but there is little evidence of it. We believe that foreign funds took notice of the Philippine market because it has lagged against the other comparable Asian markets on a year-to-date performance basis," Vistan said.

"We are just not certain how far the quarterly window dressing can push the market farther. The Phisix is already close to its major resistance level of 1,170. A likely scenario is for the market to retrace back to the 1,100 level before making another run toward the last week of the 1st (semester). We advise investors against getting too excited and making drastic moves in their portfolios. Investors are advised to buy on dips and sell on rallies," he said.

On stock picks, BNP Paribas research head Ed Bancod said there was still some scope for gains in the share prices of Ayala Land Inc. and SM Prime in the short-term.

Elena R. Torrijos

Red tape and then some

MINDANAO ONE

Joji Ilagan-Bian

WHY does a trip to City Hall, or any other government office or company for that matter, make a lot of people frown?

It's at the top of our list of undesirables, just like getting a root canal for example or having a tooth extracted. Sometimes we wish we could avoid it altogether.

The reason maybe lies in the fact that such offices take you on a roller coaster ride of endless forms to fill up, countless lines to go through and dozens of people to talk to.

The whole process takes up a lot of our time and energy. One must admit it really is difficult to do business nowadays.

This tedious task is what some people call "red tape." Red tape kills good business. This kind of bureaucracy breeds negativity, which unfortunately, has been going on for a long time.

This kind of corruption can be traced back hundreds of years—as far back as the Spanish period.

The Spanish era was punctuated with corruption, such as unethical practices in the management of the government's tobacco monopoly; the Chinese bribing officials to obtain residence in the country; excessively high taxes and fees and gift giving.

The American period saw continued corruption; the promotion of private enterprises precipitated massive and systematic corrupt practices.

These ranged from the granting of special favors to select citizens to the granting of employment based on patron-client relationships.

The Philippine government, from the Marcos administration right up to Estrada's regime, was also pockmarked by corruption.

From crony capitalism, massive money laundering, allegations of diversion of funds, nepotism and stock market manipulation, the Philippines has heard it all.

You experience it when you apply for a business permit; when you want to process documents; when someone well-connected is hired over a more qualified candidate; or when funds for public projects are siphoned to the pockets of local officials.

Corruption is a very serious problem, especially in a country where 30 percent of the population live below the poverty line. Scarce resources are squandered on overpriced projects that generate lucrative payoffs, while priority sectors such as education and health suffer immensely.

Rather than enhancing a more equitable distribution of income, corruption distorts the allocation of social resources away from those who are legally entitled to them and toward the rich, the powerful, and the politically well connected.

Rather than compensating civil servants for poor pay, red tape undermines the merit system and compromises service professionalism.

But in spite of all aggravations corruption triggers, different sector representatives continue to pursue the belief that the Philippines can still extricate itself from this moral dilemma.

In a recent Social Weather Stations survey among the business sector, a slight majority of managers believe that corruption is wrong because it hurts the country, rather than because it is immoral.

The Transparent and Accountable Governance (TAG) project, supported by The Asia Foundation (TAF), SWS has been surveying enterprise managers since 2000 on their views on corruption.

In 2002 and early 2003, 55 percent of them believe that corruption hurts and impedes national development.

Almost half of them say corruption is a part of the way government worked, rather than that the government can be run without it.

At the top of the list are government agencies which deserve commendation and are cited by the SWS as agencies that are less corrupt now than they were five years ago.

These are the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Social Security System.

Other praiseworthy private organizations that have been cited for fighting against corruption and have instituted a high percentage of reform are the Makati Business Club, Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC), Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) and the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel).

Let these agencies and organizations serve as examples for others to follow suit.

Serious efforts to contain corruption need continual collaboration between the local government units, civil society, and the private sector. The Asia Foundation and the Mindanao Business Council are doing their part by forming the Mindanao Coalition for Transparent and Accountable Governance (MCTAG).

As the wheels of history continue to turn, we cannot allow another generation of children to be enmeshed in the culture of corruption. The time to change is NOW!

(Ms Bian is the chairperson of the Mindanao Business Council and the acting chairperson for the East Asean Business Council).

Unique goal . . .

From page B1

Cito Lorenzo's objective to link infrastructure development with agriculture.

Monozca said he started Parmon a year and a half ago after he turned the tables on the second generation taipans who have asked him to either run or assist in their respective enterprises. "I told them to sit on the board of a new company that I will form because it will probably be the most exciting thing they would ever do—and it would be of national interest in the next 10 years."

Lucio Tan Jr., Marco Yuchengco Santos, Lauro Leviste II, Antonio Palanca Quirino III, and Mark B. Chiongbian liked Monozca's vision of living out what President Ramos had envisioned to do when he encouraged the taipans to form Asia's Emerging Dragon Corp. to build a new airport terminal.

"Parmon is an example of harmony, discipline, camaraderie and resourcefulness—putting egos aside for a common cause," Monozca said. Parmon was established out of Singapore partly because Monozca had been based there for nine years and partly because of its high profile as a successful regional business hub that is only three hours away from the Philippines.

Parmon has styled itself as a gateway for foreign investors keen on doing business in the Philippines specifically in areas that the shareholders have agreed as the country's main strengths.

Since it started with only 150,000 Singapore dollars in the bank, Parmon has already generated $10 million worth of deals despite the Iraq war and the SARS outbreak.

Its first project was ParmonCentury, which has slashed cost of remittances and bill payments by 40 percent with the establishment of a global infrastructure network in partnership with Singapore Post and British Telecoms. "Philippine businesses can now go regional and global at a fraction of the cost as they don't have to put up payment collection and offices overseas anymore," said Monozca, who expects to expand the service to the US, the UK, Hong Kong, Australia and the Middle East in the next 24 months.

Monozca said the shareholders decided to go into remittance because they considered it as the country's "silver." "We don't like having many foreign parties trying to set a foothold in this. Since we knew that we would have great influence over banks which the shareholders' families own, we felt it was a good start."

Parmon's next project was the establishment of ParmonSAE, a music and media school, in partnership with SAE, the world's largest audio engineering school. "Music is in the hearts and minds of Filipinos and is not something anyone can take away from us easily," Monozca said.

ParmonSAE will have its own record label and music courses ranging from two weeks to two years for both executives and artist. Monozca said the project would provide a stepping stone for Filipino and other international artists to seek international exposure.

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Handicapped artists welcomed to int'l dance competition

AN INTEGRATED performing group composed of disabled, disadvantaged and tribal youth comprising the Earthsavers Dreams Ensemble joined by selected participants of the Kalahi Cultural Project of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo have been welcomed to participate at the International Dance Competition in Bologna, Italy headed by Carlo C. Chiucchi from June 19 to 24. The Earthsavers Dreams Ensemble composed of "handicapable" artists-street children acrobats and indigenous youth-have been cited by Unesco Sources Magazine as "one of the most unique theater companies in the world."

They have been trained to perform a dramatic repertoire promoting a culture of peace, social justice, and sustainable development under the direction of Ramon Magsaysay Outstanding Asian Artist for Public Service Cecile Guidote Alvarez, producer-host of the award-winning drama serial "Radyo Balintataw", which had a long running TV version and is presently heard in DZRH. A creative team of artists has given the performers intensive lessons in different music and dance disciplines.

According to Cecile Guidote Alvarez, "It is a distinct honor that our 'handicapable' artists are not circumscribed amongst those with disabilities but have been recognized as competent enough to compete among those able bodied ballerinas, jazz dancers, and folk artists from different parts of the world. It is, in fact, a celebration of their achievement."

The group has been seen by former US President Jimmy Carter, the wife of UN Secretary General Kofi Anan, and Unesco Director General Matsuura, who have all hailed their talents and the value of the group's message. Last year, the performers-as goodwill ambassadors of the country-were given a send-off by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to the 2nd Cultural Olympiad in Denmark where they were featured in all major newspapers. Nitin Desai, Undersecretary General of the UN in charge of the Commission of Sustainable Development, praised their performance as "enthralling for its vigorous expression, compassionate in its message and powerful in its impact." Peter Yarrow of the legendary folk music trio Peter, Paul and Mary expressed to the group "his love and admiration for your courage, your superb artistry and your beautiful hearts. You teach us all something about loving and you make us one with the beauty of your art and inspiring souls."

WORLD FOOD EXPO EXPANDS

The World Food Expo (Wofex) 2003 has been experiencing tremendous response from the country's food and beverage industry. With the outstanding sales of the event to date and with the remaining available spaces inside the World Trade Center in Pasay City almost down to the last few booths, Premier Events Plus Group Inc. has decided to open the World Trade Pavilion to accommodate all other remaining interested exhibitors. The World Food Expo 2003 is slated from Aug. 6 to 9. Call 436-4711/12, 929-7963/93, or e-mail info@PEP-Group.com, or log on to www.worldsfoodexpo.com. Shown formalizing the agreement are Rafael 'Boydee' Dizon, PEPGroup chair, and Cecilia Sanchez, managing director of World Trade Center. Witnessing the signing (standing, from left) are Joel Pascual, PEPGroup president, Lila Pascual-Cailes, WTC senior marketing manager, Randy Manaloto, PEPGroup VP-finance and Jimmy Velasquez, WTC senior facilities manager.

NEW ADDITION TO THE FAMILY

All smiles for Diethelm (Philippines) Inc. and Mead Johnson top level managers after a 5-year contract signing. Diethelm begins to strengthen its hold of being the leading pharmaceutical distributor by adding Mead Johnson (Nutritionals) to its product line-up. Shown seated are Dr. Guido Oelkers (Diethelm Keller head, global business unit-healthcare) and Kasper Jakobsen (general manager and president, Mead Johnson). Standing, from left, are Annette J. Antolin (HR manager, Diethelm), Angie Salting (finance director, Diethelm), Philip Hall (IT director, Diethelm), Juergen Wolfgang Hirschberg (president/general manager, Diethelm), Larry Williams (operations director, Diethelm), and Benjie Soberano (trade sales director).

Pacific Internet celebrates subscribers' anniversaries with freebies, discounts

HERE'S another reason to stick with Pacific Internet-the country's first and most highly experienced ISP. Pacific Internet is rewarding loyal subscribers with a whole array of carefully selected freebies and exciting discounts. This is the company's way of showing its gratitude to all its subscribers who have stayed with and enjoyed Pacific Internet's services all these years.

Subscribers who have been with Pacific Internet for six years or more get 25 percent off their subscription fee, while five years get 20 percent, four years 15 percent, three years 10 percent, and two years 5 percent off, effective on their next Pacific Internet anniversary. This means that if you became a Pacific Internet subscriber, say, six years ago, you can get as much as a 25-percent discount on your next anniversary with Pacific Internet. Plus, you will also enjoy one month free Internet use, which you can avail yourself of on the very month of your anniversary with Pacific Internet.

That's not all. Staying with Pacific Internet will be a real delight with freebies and discounts of up to 10 percent off in some of the most elegant restaurants, bars and shops in town, including L'opera, Caffe Maestro, Osteria Italia, Azzurro, Spargo, Chimes, Pro Golf, and The Twenty Fifth.

The longer you stay with Pacific Internet, the more discounts you get on your subscription fee. Celebrate your anniversary with us and log on to www.pacific.net.ph/anniversary for more details.

Australian Embassy's new home

THE AUSTRALIAN Embassy, Manila has a new home. The Embassy is now at the center of Manila's premier business district in Makati at Level 23, Tower 2 of the RCBC Plaza, Makati. The RCBC Plaza was chosen because of its high-quality office facilities and ability to meet the embassy's requirements for contiguous office space in terms of the floor area needed.

The move follows an unprecedented fit-out in terms of time to completion. Contractors have worked 24 hours a day, seven days a week to finish the chancery in a record time of three months. The fit-out constructors were Bovis Lend Lease, whilst Australian firms MSA and Associates Pty Ltd provided architectural design and GHD Pty Ltd provided engineering services design. Davis Langdon and Seah provided quantity surveying and cost-control services.

The public may call the embassy through its new trunkline 757-8100, or fax 757-8268.

For visa applications and migration matters, in the first instance the call center numbers are 1909-3622779 (for PLDT); 1900-3622779 (for Globelines); 1903-3622779 (for Bayantel)-calls charged at P19 per minute. Comprehensive information on visa application may be obtained from the websites www.australia.com.ph, or www.immi.gov.au.

For more specific concerns, the following sections of the embassy can be called through these new numbers: immigration and visa matters (prerecorded client information only) at 757-8340, fax 757-8269; consular (Australian passports) at 757-8100, fax 757-8324; Austrade at 757-8321, fax 757-8327; AusAID at 757-8195, fax 757-8265; defense at 757-8130, fax 757-8329, and the Australian Federal Police at 757-8182, fax 757-8330.

READER'S DIGEST AWARDS SUPERBRANDS 2003 WINNERS

Representatives of some of the country's leading companies (in the Everyday Category) are shown gathered for the SuperBrands 2003 Awards Ceremony hosted by Reader's Digest at the Davao Function Room of Westin Philippine Plaza. The winning brands were voted by Filipinos as their brands of choice in the recently concluded Reader's Digest Superbrands 2003 survey. This year's SuperBrands include Philippine Airlines, Swatch, Shell, Sony, Canon, Campbell's Soup, Coca-Cola, Petron, Nokia, Pilot, Hewlett Packard and General Electric. Now on its 5th year, SuperBrands is an annual survey conducted by Reader's Digest that sheds light on the consuming preferences of a representative cross-section of Asian society. Respondents from six markets-Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and the Philippines were asked to vote on 40 categories of products and services that range from luxury goods to everyday necessities. The complete survey result is published in the May 2003 issue of Reader's Digest, and is available online at www.superbrandsasia.com.

Mira Verde Homes favored

PAG-IBIG members who want to have their own homes are buying from Mira Verde Homes in Barangay San Luis, Antipolo City.

Mira Verde Homes offers high quality yet affordable house-and-lot packages. Buyers can choose either a townhouse or a single-attached unit, depending on the member's family size or loan entitlement. A townhouse unit costs P445,000 while a single-attached unit is P675,000.

Mira Verde is popular to Pag-IBIG members from both private and government offices because of its strategic location. Aside from its "Antipolo view," cool climate and clean air, Mira Verde is also accessible to public transportation and to shopping malls, public markets, churches, hospitals and schools.

Mira Verde is funded by a Pag-IBIG Developmental Loan, which makes both land development and construction of housing units more definite and faster.

The developer, Piedra Rosa Development Corp. (PRDC) is now readying Phase 2 to accommodate more Pag-IBIG members who want to use their housing loan privileges. For non-Pag-IBIG members, PRDC offers special in-house financing schemes. Some of the companies whose employees have chosen to buy from Mira Verde Homes are ABS-CBN, National Panasonic, Semicon, Capital Garments, DispoPhil, and Energy Regulatory Commission. Mira Verde is also attractive to overseas workers, entrepreneurs, and retirees.

For more inquiries, call Helen at 683-6314/683-6315 or at 0917-5356586.

Piet Vellekoop workshop

INTERNATIONAL floral design master Piet Vellekoop shares his expertise on flower arranging in a two-day seminar-workshop dubbed "A Challenge to Creativity" on June 10 and 11 at the Celebrity Sports Club, Capitol Hills Drive, Old Balara, Diliman, Quezon City.

The event, sponsored by The Netherlands Management Cooperation Program (Nederland Programma Uitzending Managers) and Agrikultura Pilipina Inc., is open to all flower shop operators, floral designers and arrangers, as well as flower enthusiasts and hobbyists.

Vellekoop will show modern techniques and styles in flower arranging on June 10. Contemporary floral designs for all occasions will be tackled on June 11. The most crucial part in flower arranging-flower and color combinations-will be included.

For inquiries visit or call Agrikultura Pilipina Inc. at 96 New York Street, Cubao, Quezon City, 439-7931/439-7932, and 1605 Laon Laan Street, Sampaloc, Manila, 741-1000/741-6967.

UNICA HIJA OPENS IN SM CITY ILOILO

Unica Hija, the fashion apparel brand for young and twenty-something ladies, opened its first franchise store at the ground floor of SM City Iloilo. The 108-sq.m. store is the biggest Unica Hija branch among its 11 outlets. Shown during the grand opening, from left, are Jeng Villon, Unica Hija franchisee Leanne Zuniga, Mayor Carina Flores of Oton, Iloilo and Bong Villon, owner of R&V Unica Hija Inc. Other Unica Hija branches are located in Greenbelt Shopping Plaza, Festival Supermall, SM City North Edsa, SM City Manila, Sucat, Pampanga, Robinsons Galleria, Metro East, Robinsons Department Store and Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall. For franchising inquiries, call 371-8373 or 410-1111.

Migration info session

THE IMMIGRATION and Visa Office of the Australian Embassy Manila will host an information session on partner migration to Australia on June 11.

The information session is designed to assist prospective applicants and sponsors understand the steps for applying for partner migration to Australia and to provide guidelines for preparing and lodging applications.

Officers from Australia's Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (Dimia) will discuss spouse, fiancée and interdependent partner categories, their basic visa requirements and the application process.

Due to limited seating, attendance at the information session is by appointment only. Interested applicants should call the following numbers for further information and to reserve their place: 1909 362 2779 (PLDT), 1900 362 2779 (Globelines), 1903 362 2779 (BayanTel).

FEU'S GOLDEN HARVESTS

In connection with Far Eastern University's Diamond Jubilee celebration this 2003, Cluster II of its outstanding alumni awardees were honored in ceremonies held at the FEU Auditorium. Shown are the honorees together with university officials seated (from left) trustees lawyer Gianna R. Montinola, Dr. Wilfrido C. Tecson, and Dr. Renato Paras, Theresita Ordonez-Turla, board of trustees chair Dr. Lourdes R. Montinola, Angelica L. Mendoza, FEU president Dr. Lydia B. Echauz, Dr. Josefina A. Patron, Dr. Lucila F. Tibigar, Opelia Gloria, Dr. Esperanza Uro-Balcos. Standing are Chi-Chi Robles Fajardo, communication department chair, Dean Lydia A. Palaypay, VP academic affairs who received the award for Teresita Sipriaso-Manuel, Graciabelle Banaria-Esperitu, Riena Clara Banaria-Magtoto representing Dean Pascasio S. Banaria, Carina Encarnacion-dela Rosa representing Dean Anacleta M. Encarnacion, Ret. Ambassador Ernesto C. Garrido, Dean Alberto P. Cruz, Alfredo B. Parungao, Celso D. Gangan, Nelson V. Co, Benjamin R. Punongbayan, Dr. Paciente A. Cordero Jr., Antonio P. Tecson, Justice Edilberto G. Sandoval, Feliciano L. Miranda, Dr. Pedro E. Zaldivar, Angelito M. Simba, Dr. Elizabeth Melchor, Aurelio R. Montinola III, vice chair, board of trustees, trustee Angelina P. Jose, and Centex Dean Dr. Dalisay G. Brawner.

Dollar weakness could undermine growth–IMF

WASHINGTON—There is risk that the dollar could fall too far against other currencies and dampen global economic growth prospects, the International Monetary Fund said in a report on Friday.

The need to continue to attract large capital inflows to finance the US current account deficit and the large share of foreign ownership of US treasuries, corporate bonds, agency securities, and equities, heightens the chance of overshooting, the report added.

Risks to world financial markets are receding as accommodative monetary policies have reduced funding costs.

"These improvements, however, can only be sustained by stronger global growth," the report on recent financial market performance said.

"One factor that could dampen global economic growth prospects is the vulnerability of the dollar to overshooting."

A sharp fall in the dollar would undermine economic growth in the euro area and in Japan, and real yields in the United States would rise, dampening growth prospects, the IMF said.

An extended period of slow global growth would erode fundamental prospects of emerging market economies and could lead to a reassessment of risk premiums for emerging market bonds.

A slowdown in global growth could also trigger a decline in foreign direct investment, a mainstay of finance for emerging markets, particularly Latin America.

The IMF also warned that emerging market issuance could become too ambitious and trigger a sell off.

"While issuance has so far been readily accommodated, there are signs of froth, notably the issuance by some second-tier Russian corporates," the IMF said.

The fund also warned of a risk to emerging market economies of credit downgrades due to a change in Moody's ratings methodology.

"The Dominican Republic, Peru, and Turkey are among the countries that could be affected," the report said. *Reuters*

Oracle bid for PeopleSoft to shake up software firms

SEATTLE—Oracle Corp.'s bid to buy rival software maker PeopleSoft Inc. on Friday for $5.1 billion could spark moves by bigger players hoping to carve out a larger piece of the market, analysts said.

At stake is the $65-billion market for business software, the applications that companies use to track their finances, inventory, production, sales, customers and employees.

The highly fragmented market has long been considered ripe for consolidation, with excellent growth prospects for software serving mid- to smaller-sized businesses.

Germany's SAP AG and No. 1 software maker Microsoft Corp. are pushing their own offerings, and Oracle, the leading database software maker, has also been trying to claim a piece of the business applications market.

Oracle's move was widely seen as defensive play after PeopleSoft said earlier this week that it would buy another major competitor, J.D. Edwards & Co., for $1.6 billion in a stock deal that would have vaulted PeopleSoft ahead of Oracle.

Albert Pang, a researcher at IDC Corp., said that anything could happen over the next few weeks, including attempts by business software heavyweight SAP or deep-pocketed Microsoft to scuttle Oracle's designs.

"The Microsoft factor has to play into this equation," Pang said. "They definitely would not want to let any opportunity pass by. The Oracle deal is far from a done deal."

The weaker global economy is only increasing the strength and influence of larger software makers, where the top four companies control only about 15 percent of the highly fragmented business software market, Pang said, making the market ripe for consolidation.

"I think this is going to force the hand" of other players in the sector, said Jamie Friedman, analyst at Fulcrum Global Partners.

Friedman said that Siebel Systems Inc., the maker of customer service and tracking software, could be pulled into a deal as either a buyer or a seller in the coming days or weeks.

So far Redmond, Washington-based Microsoft has remained silent, although it could disrupt any ongoing deals quickly if it decides to tap into its $46-billion cash hoard. *Reuters*

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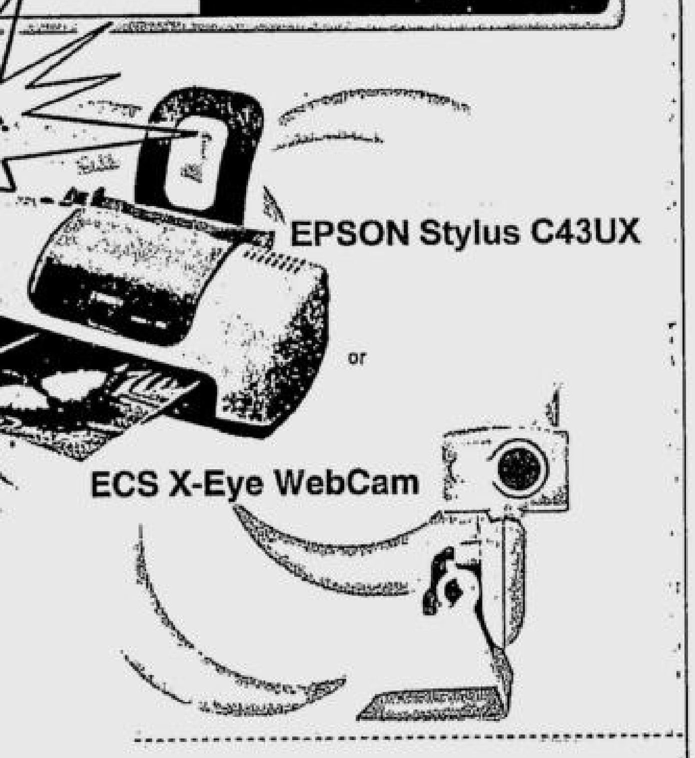

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US jobless rate rose to 9-yr high of 6.1% in May

A TRADER walks across the floor of the New York Stock Exchange June 06 in New York City. A strong rally on Wall Street ran out of steam as investors locked in profits from a strong week of gains. The Dow Jones industrials average gave back most early gains, but ended up 18.13 points or 0.20 percent to 9,059.43 at the closing bell. AFP

WASHINGTON—The US unemployment rate rose to a nine-year high of 6.1 percent in May as businesses axed 17,000 jobs, the government said Friday, reflecting a sluggish postwar economy with meagre pickings for the jobless.

The jobless rate, up from 6 percent in April to the highest level since July 1994, was in line with Wall Street economists' expectations.

But businesses cut about half as many jobs as had been feared.

"The good news is that the declines were not as deep as they had been," said Conference Board economist Ken Goldstein.

"But the general picture is still that the US economy in the second quarter is growing too slowly to open up new jobs, with some indications that we might see a continuation of this at least through the summer."

Many of the figures underwent a sweeping series of statistical revisions, notably scaling back job losses in April from 48,000 to zero. The revisions had no impact on the unemployment rate.

Wall Street shot higher on the news before fading later in the day. The Dow Jones industrial average of 30 top stocks closed at 9,062.79, up 21.49 points or 0.24 percent on the day.

Overall, the number of unemployed people rose 212,000 to 9.0 million, the Labor Department said.

Factory workers were hard hit as manufacturers cut 53,000 jobs, despite about 9,000 people returning to work at car plants after temporary shutdowns.

Losses in manufacturing amounted to nearly 2.6 million jobs since July 2000.

Retailers pared 14,000 employees.

Airlines shed 5,000 jobs, bringing the total losses to 113,000 since March 2001.

But buoyant housing, powered by four-decade-low interest rates, spurred a 26,000-strong rise in construction jobs.

It was the latest in a series of reports showing the US economy gingerly pulling out of a slump, with businesses thawing out from an Iraq war-inspired freeze.

The US economy plodded ahead at a 1.9 percent growth rate in the first quarter of 2003, only a marginal improvement from the 1.4 percent rate of the fourth quarter of 2002.

Expansion in the vast services sector picked up speed in May, however, and a contraction in manufacturing activity slowed, surveys by the Institute for Supply Management showed.

"There are some indications that the economy, especially jobs, is beginning to stabilize after the war," said Wells Fargo Banks chief economist Sung Won Sohn. *AFP*

Wall Street stocks scale new heights

NEW YORK—The bull market on Wall Street is nearly three months old. But some analysts say the trend still could be higher if the US economy shifts into higher gear later this year, as many expect.

The Dow Jones industrial average crossed the 9,000 mark with a gain for the week of 2.40 percent to end Friday at 9,062.79; the highest level for the blue-chip index since last July.

The Nasdaq composite, which rose to a 52-week high over the past week, gained 1.97 percent to 1,627.42.

The broad-market Standard and Poor's 500 rose 2.51 percent in the week to end at 987.76, its best level in a year.

"I am encouraged by what's going on in the market and some of the positive signs for the US economy," said Byron Wien at Morgan Stanley.

So far the economic data has been spotty, but has fueled hopes of a rebound as the year progresses.

Investors gave a positive spin to the latest US jobs report; even though the jobless rate rose to a nine-year-high of 6.1 percent, the number of jobs lost was just 17,000 people lost jobs in May, fewer than the expected figure of 46,000.

"On balance I think that this is a net positive, relative to expectations," said Dick Rippe, economist at Prudential Securities. "Employment is still on the weak side, but the losses are starting to diminish."

Some analysts say the underlying trend on Wall Street suggests the bull still has room to run, with investor optimism returning.

"The stock market appears to have broken out from the top end of its 11-month trading range, which we have referred to as 'the box,'" said Wachovia Securities chief investment strategist Rod Smyth said.

"We see this breakout as the stock market's willingness to believe that the economy will avoid a deflationary recession and that corporations can prosper in an environment of 'painfully slow' economic growth with low inflation."

Among active shares, Oracle edged up 0.61 percent for the week to 13.09 even after losing ground Friday in the wake of its hostile bid for rival software firm PeopleSoft, which gained 8.72 percent to 17.82.

JD Edwards, the object of a friendly acquisition announcement from PeopleSoft, added 11.77 percent to 13.20.

Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia shed 6.14 to 10.24 after founder Martha Stewart was indicted on criminal charges in connection with a stock scandal, and was hit with civil insider trading charges.

McDonald's shares sizzled, up 12.44 percent to 21.06 percent after a strong sales report for May.

Airlines took off on hopes of a recovery in the troubled sector. American Airlines jumped 43.69 percent to 9.11 and Continental Airlines 32.4 to 14.60.

Dow component IBM slid 9.08 percent for the week to 80.05 on news of a government probe into its accounting. *AFP*

Is Japan's deflation worsening or leveling?

TOKYO—Deflation is the word on people's lips as the specter of a sustained fall in prices looms over the global economy.

Japan is already in its fifth straight year of price declines stemming from a combination of overhang from the 1980s asset bubble, slack demand and cheaper imports from Asia.

Most economists agree deflation is likely to stick around for a while, but recent data shows a growing divergence between two traditional price indicators—the GDP deflator and the consumer price index (CPI)—which has left them divided on whether Japan's deflationary state is accelerating or leveling off.

Gross domestic product (GDP) data released last month showed the GDP deflator, perhaps the most comprehensive indicator of prices, fell 3.5 percent in the January-March quarter compared with a year earlier, the largest drop on record.

In contrast, the core nationwide CPI for April registered a decline of 0.4 percent from a year ago, the smallest fall since August 2000.

Although economists said the most recent data was skewed by seasonal and technical factors, the discrepancy between the GDP deflator and CPI has been widening since the late 1990s.

A recent Bank of Japan (BOJ) study said the gap was largely because the deflator covered a wider range of components, such as capital investment resources like information technology products whose prices fall faster, and because of a technical downward bias for the data.

Many economists said the CPI is a better indicator when looking at deflation over the medium term.

In terms of policy implications, the BOJ has pledged to maintain its quantitative easing framework—flooding the money market with liquidity to keep short-term interest rates at zero—until changes in the CPI stabilize at zero or above. *Reuters*

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Tyco shareholders claim $6-B fraud

BOSTON—Investors burned by the collapse of Tyco International Ltd.'s stock last year charged in a lawsuit the conglomerate falsified financial reports and inflated pre-tax profits by more than $6 billion between December 1999 and June 2002.

The court documents were made available on Friday in US District Court in New Hampshire. The investors' filing opposes Tyco's motion to dismiss class-action claims against it.

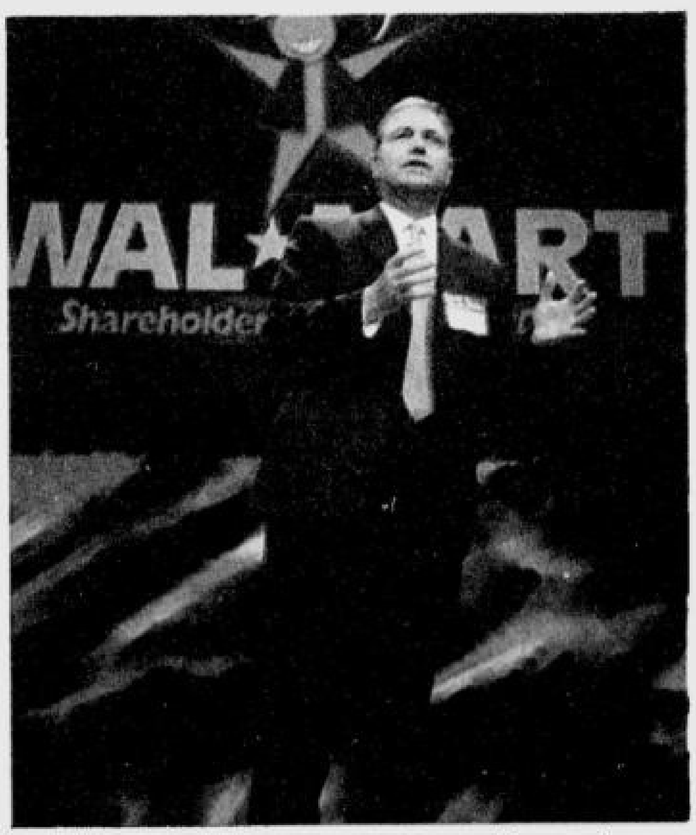
Shareholder complaints began piling up across the country last year after an investigation mushroomed into criminal charges against three former Tyco executives and its lead outside director. The claims were consolidated in New Hampshire's US District Court.

In the documents, investors alleged that fraud occurred during the tenure of former Tyco chair Dennis Kozlowski, who is accused of running a criminal enterprise that looted more than $600 million from the company.

At the height of the company's troubles last year, the decline in its share price had erased as much as $90 billion in market capitalization.

Despite that potential liability, Heymann recently raised his rating on Tyco shares to "buy" from "neutral."

The shareholder filing said, "Even though the company has taken billions of dollars in charges in connection with overstated prior earnings, Tyco has still essentially refused to go back and restate its previously stated financial results." *Reuters*



LEE Scott, CEO and president of Wal-Mart, addresses the stockholders at the annual meeting in Fayetteville, Ark., June 6. A slow economy and some high-profile lawsuits aren't keeping Wal-Mart Stores Inc. from celebrating its status as the world's largest retailer and a company with growing sales. AP

Analysts see US Fed cut despite mild jobs data

NEW YORK—Economists curbed their expectations for an aggressive rate cut by the Federal Reserve later this month after the May employment report turned out to be less grim than some in the market feared.

Most analysts still expect the Fed to cut borrowing costs at its late June meeting, after a series of strong hints by Fed chair Alan Greenspan.

But they are now leaning towards the Fed making a modest quarter-point cut rather than a hefty half-percentage point move.

A Reuters poll of the top bond dealers who trade directly with the Fed found 18 out of 19 are calling for a cut in interest rates at the central bank's June policy meeting.

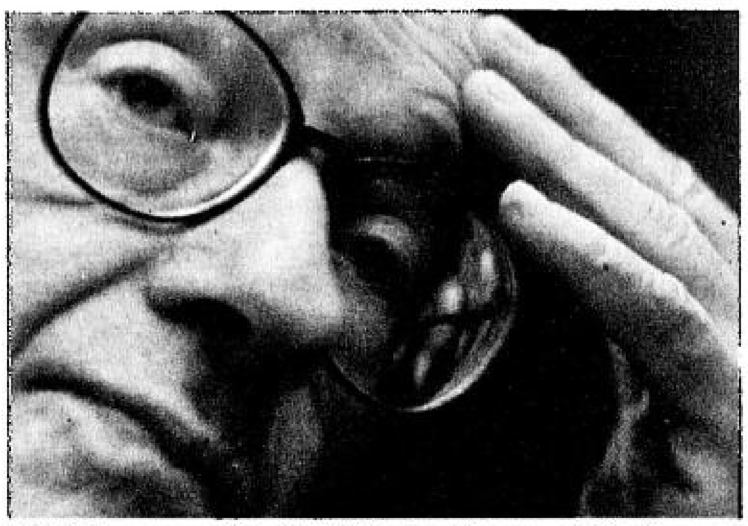
The survey, taken on Friday, found 11 bond dealers expect a quarter-point cut and seven see a half-point move.

"This doesn't make a rate cut at the end of June a slam-dunk. At least it decreases the likelihood of a 50-basis-point cut, making a 25-basis-point cut more of an option," said John Spinello, fixed-income strategist at Merrill Lynch Government Securities.

Interest rates are already at four-decade lows, with the Fed's benchmark federal funds rate at 1.25 percent after 12 rate cuts in 2001 and 2002.

But Greenspan has fueled market expectations of another jolt of stimulus by saying "insurance" against further economic weakness is cheap.

In a panel discussion earlier this week, Greenspan said the Fed would "lean over backwards" to prevent even the slightest chance of damaging deflation, where falling prices corrode company profits and workers' wages and eat away at economic growth.



ALAN Greenspan, chief of the US Federal Reserve, said that it may be necessary to lower interest rates as "insurance" against deflation even though the US economy appeared set to pick up. REUTERS

By focusing more on the risk of further declines in inflation, rather than recent economic reports, the Fed chair cemented expectations that another rate cut is in the offing.

"It's not about growth, which is slowly starting to accelerate. The issue really is how much do you need to minimize the deflation risks, and their feeling is you can't have enough insurance," said JP Morgan senior economist Jim Glassman.

The fed funds future market, which bets on the path of monetary policy, has fully priced in a 25-basis-point rate cut at the June 24-25 Federal Open Market Committee meeting.

But those odds retreated slightly on Friday after the payrolls report.

The Labor Department said 17,000 payrolls were lost in May, fewer than forecast, while the unemployment rate rose to a near nine-year high of 6.1 percent, matching expectations.

Several major revisions to recent data showed a much better picture for jobs growth from January through to April.

Some economists said the employment report, as well as figures showing improved consumer confidence and better manufacturing activity, lessened the need for a rate cut.

"From the Fed's point of view, they have a real difficult situation. They have talked the market into an easing and in fact, these numbers suggest they many not have to ease at all," said Wachovia chief economist John Silvia.

"The economy is turning around on its own, maybe not as fast as they would like, but it's turning," he said.

Nevertheless, he said the Fed's own rhetoric made a quarter-point rate cut in June the most likely outcome. *Reuters*

Germans get four more shop hours

FRANKFURT, Germany—The Saturday shopping sprint has been a time-honored German tradition: a frantic push through long lines for last-minute groceries as the clock ticked down to the mandatory 4 p.m. closing time.

The tradition is supposed to pass into history this Saturday, as a new law lets stores stay open a precious four hours more, until 8 p.m.—the same as during the rest of the week. For regulation-bound Germany, the change is a small gust of freedom.

But the long-fought battle for the limited extension—and fierce resistance from unionized store workers and some shopkeepers—highlight the difficulty of reforming Europe's largest economy, even as it teeters on the brink of recession.

Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's government hopes the longer hours will pump a little more money into suffering retailers' tills in a country where the economy has been stagnant into a third year—and fell by 0.2 percent in the first three months of this year.

"I hope that as many businesses as possible will use the new chance, and I hope that consumers will now be able to fulfill their wishes without time pressure," Economics and Labor Minister Wolfgang Clement said Friday.

"That would be a boost for the economy, it will revitalize our downtowns and so help other businesses."

Alfred and Tamara Steinbrecher, strolling past the shops on Frankfurt's Schillerstrasse, said the change was overdue.

"The longer, the better, as in England or America," said Alfred, a retired businessman pulling a shopping cart. *AP*

McDonald's stock surges

CHICAGO—McDonald's on Friday reported its first worldwide gain in comparable sales in 15 months, as new salads and children's Happy Meals spurred robust US sales, and its shares rose to nine-month highs.

US sales at hamburger restaurants open more than a year were up 6.3 percent in May, the largest increase in four years.

Same-store sales worldwide at McDonald's rose 2.2 percent.

Under the leadership of Chief Executive Jim Cantalupo, McDonald's Corp. has been slowing expansion and shifting its emphasis toward improving its existing restaurants. Cantalupo attributed much of the sales improvement to US menu initiatives.

"We like that they are trying to focus on the basic business," said Davenport & Co. analyst Ann Gurkin. "That is a key factor in driving the performance of the stock."

In recent months, McDonald's has added menu items, such as entree-sized salads with Newman's Own salad dressing, and attempted to improve service to win back customers in the United States, its largest market with some 13,500 hamburger outlets.

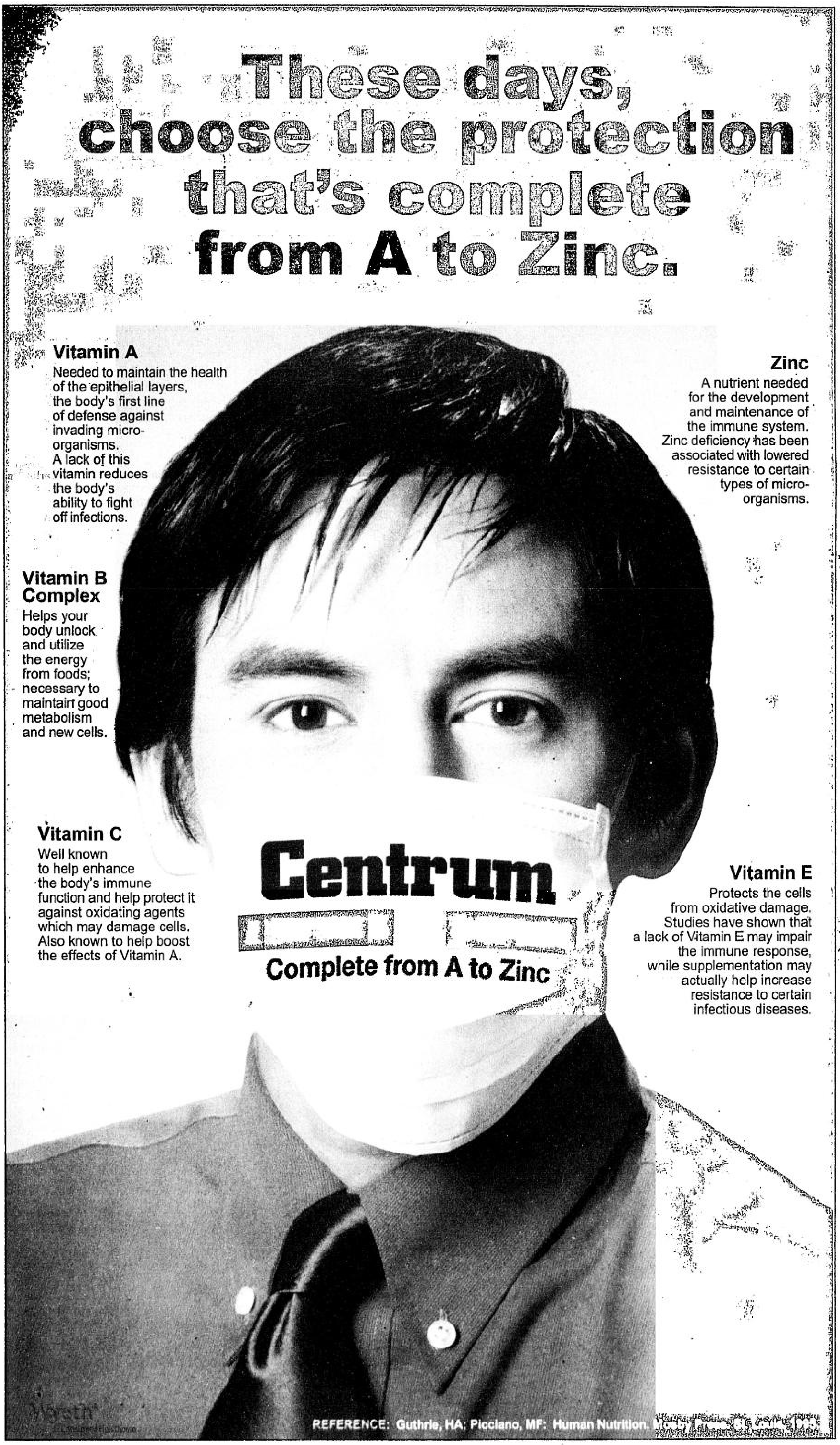
"I did not think they were going to throw up a 6-percent (US) number," said Allan Hickok, restaurant analyst with US Bancorp Piper Jaffray. Hickok attributed much of the boost to the new salads, which McDonald's introduced in March and is targeting heavily toward women.

The company this week launched its new McGriddles breakfast sandwich line, featuring two pancake halves surrounding fillings like sausage and eggs.

The current Happy Meal promotion is tied to Disney Corp.'s new "Finding Nemo" animated film and features a movie-related toy with each meal.

While analysts expect June sales to be higher, as more consumers test the new salads and other items, they cautioned it may be hard for the world's largest restaurant company to sustain such robust sales improvement.

McDonald's posted its first quarterly loss in January. *Reuters*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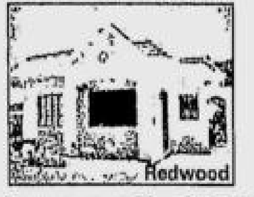

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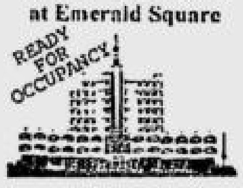

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that estate of VIRGILIO E. ZULUETA was adjudicated to his sole heir Ma. Dolores Z. Aranda per Doc.495 Page 100 Book X Series 2003 before Notary Public Maria Rowena F. Mojica of Makati City.
PDI-June 9,16&23, 2003

Notice is hereby given that the heirs of LIDWINA LOS BA—OS ABES had executed a Deed of Extrajudicial Settlement of estate with waiver of rights on April 10, 2003 and acknowledged the same before Notary Public Dante S. David for and in the City of Quezon, Philippines and bearing Doc. No. 139; Page No. 28; Book No. 1; Series of 2003 of his Notarial Register (PDI-June 2, 9 & 16 2003)

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• DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS
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MIGUEL PONS GARCIA

Peacefully joined his Creator on June 7, 2003.

His remains lie in state at Filinvest East Chapel, Antipolo City. Interment will be on June 11, 2003 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

His bereaved wife Naty; children Gil & Mina Tiongson, Marcelito (Chippy); sister Araceli request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

"Let the words of my mouth meet your Favor, keep the thoughts of my heart before you, Lord, my rock, my redeemer..."

— Psalm 21:15

In Memory of Our Beloved

on his First Death Anniversary

Atty. Lino Robiños Casabar, Jr.

of Midsayap, Cotabato
(April 22, 1938 to June 9, 2002)

was Provincial Board Member, Asst. Provincial Fiscal, Municipal Judge and Educator of the Province of Cotabato, Ateneo Law Class '61.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass shall be offered at Sto. Niño Parish Church, Midsayap, Cotabato; Holy Cross Parish Church, Carigara, Leyte; Immaculate Conception Parish Church, Pasig City; St. John the Baptist Parish Church, Taytay, Rizal; Mary the Queen Parish Church, San Juan, M.M.; St. Francis Parish Church, Mandaluyong City; Philippine Stock Exchange Chapel, Pasig City.

The family requests the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

"JESUS YOU ARE MY NUMBER ONE"

Our much loved NANAY

EVANGELINA C. MORALES

is now with our Lord

Her remains lie in state at the Church Upon the Rock United Methodist Church at #186 San Rafael St., Plainview, Mandaluyong City.

Cremation will take place at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, 11 June 2003 at the Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

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#27 Crisologo St., Vigan, Ilocos Sur;
Tel. 722-2730; Cell (0917) 5680136; (0917) 5680145
Manila #23 Palo St., Project 2, Quezon City; Tel. 434-3258
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1501 C.M. Recto Ave. cor. T. Mapua, Manila;
Tels. 711-6931 to 35; 732-4795; 732-2827
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143 G. Araneta Ave. cor. Kaliraya St., Quezon City;
Tels. 749-3806 to 11; 712-3001; 743-6502 or 05
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque; Tels 820-1592; 825-0947; 825-8835
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
79 Naguilian Rd., Baguio City; Tel. (074) 443-3337; (074) 442-3117
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G. Tirona St., Imus, Cavite; Tels. (046) 471-3386; (046) 471-4417; (046) 571-1978
LOYOLA MEMORIAL CHAPELS
EDSA cor. Bernardino St., Guadalupe, Makati City; Tels. 895-1011 to 19

LOYOLA MEMORIAL PARK CHAPELS & CREMATORY SERVICES
Loyola Memorial Park, A. Bonifacio Avenue, Tañong, Marikina City
Tels. 941-3196 to 98, 941-3676; Telefax 941-3577
MARIAN MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Marcos Hiway, Antipolo, Rizal; Tels 645-1855, 682-0209; 682-0210
MARCELO FUNERAL HOMES
74-M Naval Street, Tangos, Navotas, Metro Manila
Tel. No. 283-1818
MT. SINAI MEMORIAL CHAPEL
Arellano St., Dagupan City; Tels. (075) 515-5960, 522-8763; (0917) 520-5001
NACIONAL MEMORIAL HOMES
264 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City; Tels. 713-5231 to 35; 714-0867; 714-0868
POPULAR MEMORIAL CHAPELS, INC.
214 Rizal Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila; Tel. Nos. 254-0867, 254-0839
ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
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Tel. 433-7132
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438 Cementina St., Pasay City; Tels. 831-1204
Sucat Branch: 8187 Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque City
Tels. 826-1376; 826-9682, (0915) 712-1220
SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO PARISH
Forbes Park, Makati City; Tel. Nos. 843-8838/30. Fax No. 843-9223
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH
East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City; Telefax 724-4139; 725-2044
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Magallanes Village, Makati City; Tels. 852-8228, 852-7284
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1511 Gen. Luna St., Paco, Manila; Tels. 522-8846, 522-9438; 400-5394

CLASSIFIEDS

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

Masbate Branch, Masbate City

INVITATION TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines, Masbate Branch will receive sealed bids on June 18, 2003 at 10:00 o'clock in the morning at the DBP Building corner Rosero & Quezon Street, Masbate City.

AREA/DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM STARTING BID
Residential lot covered by TCT No. T-12767, with an area of 1,103 sq.m., more or less, and a one (1) storey residential building made of reinforced concrete and strong materials w/ a total floor area of 240 sq.m. including all improvements existing and hereinafter to exist thereon, located at Quezon St., Cagba, Tugbo, Masbate City.	P3,000,000.00

BIDDERS ARE REMINDED:
1. To investigate, inspect and verify the properties listed above to ascertain for themselves the status of the same and its actual conditions before participating in the bidding:
2. To submit together with bidders bond equivalent to 10% of bid price, which should be in Cash, Manager or Cashiers Check; and,
3. To be on time, no bids will be accepted once unsealing of bids commences.

The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Bank.

DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For Inquiries:
Please call Tel. Nos. (056) 333-4073 & 333-2236 or visit DBP office at corner Rosero & Quezon Sts., Masbate City.

(Sgd.) **EVA ALMARIO-CASTILLO**
Branch Manager

(PDI--June 9 & 10, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region X
Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City
Tel. No. (088) 8552721 Fax. No. (088) 8552723

ADDENDUM TO THE INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Date Published May 1 & 7, 2003

In view of the need to properly evaluate the documentary requirements of prospective bidders, the National Food Authority (NFA) Region X wishes to inform all interested parties that the Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid is hereby extended.

Activities	From	To
Letter of Intent/Submission of Eligibility Requirements	May 15-21/03	June 16-22/03
Issuance of Bid Documents	June 6-12, 2003	July 7-11, 2003
Pre-Bid Conference	July 3, 2003	July 30, 2003
Deadline for submission of Bid Documents		August 18, 2003 at 10:00 A.M.

Opening of Bids:
Sector B - August 18/03 (Monday) at 1:30 P.M.
Sector A - Will follow after Sector B is completed

Interested applicants may apply for Registration and submit Registration requirements not later than **June 12, 2003** to the BAC Secretariat, 2nd Floor, Regional Office No. X, Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City. Certificate of Registration will be issued to applicants who submitted complete documents.

Bid documents shall be available to Eligible Bidders or his duly authorized representative (with SPA) upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,200.00 per project in the form of cash or cashier's check in favor of NFA. Eligible bidders may submit their queries in writing to the BAC Secretariat two (2) days prior to the scheduled Pre-Bid Conference.

NFA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to waive any formalities or informalities, assume no obligations whatsoever or indemnity to the bidders any expense or loss that it may incur in the preparation of its bid, and to accept only such bids or to award to any contractor whose bid is considered most advantageous to the NFA.

(Sgd.) **FLO G. PASCUAL**
Regional Director

(PDI--June 2 & 9, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Secretary
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City

AN INVITATION

The Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (ACEF) Executive Committee and National Technical Committee would like to invite interested parties to a public consultation relative to the proposed revisions of DA Administrative Order No. 39 s. 1999, otherwise known as the **REVISED IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES ON THE UTILIZATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL COMPETITIVENESS ENHANCEMENT FUND.**

The public hearing will be held on 19 June 2003, 2:00 p.m. at the Convention Hall of the Bureau of Soils and Water Management, Visayas Avenue corner Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City. Due to limited seats and operating expenses, interested groups/parties are enjoined to send only one (1) representative per group/organization. Expenses incurred in connection with attendance at the consultation shall be borne by the participants concerned. Persons intending to participate at the consultation may wish to refer to the DA website: http:/www.da.gov.ph for detailed information about the proposed revisions.

Interested parties may obtain further information and send expression of interest at the address below:

THE ACEF NATIONAL TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT
Room 209 – Project Development Service,
Department of Agriculture
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Telephone Nos. (02) 928-8741 to 65 local 209 / 232
(02) 922-0930

For administrative purposes, the deadline for expression of interest to attend consultation is on June 17, 2002.

(Sgd.) **LUIS P. LORENZO, JR.**
Secretary
Chair, ACEF Executive Committee

(PDI–June 9, 12 & 16, 2003)

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Dr. Queena Lee-Chua
Columnist, Philippine Daily Inquirer & TOYM Awardee

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Center for Learning and Teaching Styles, Philippines

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

WILMA JUNAS

The "Public" is hereby given notice that anyone who has information regarding the whereabouts of **WILMA JUNAS** whose picture appears at left and whose last known address is B-234 L-6 P-2 Mabuhay St., Paliparan I, Dasmariñas, Cavite is requested to contact our Legal Department, at Tel. Nos. 899-9595 or 896-4743.

Likewise, any information that would lead to the immediate recovery of the herein-below described motor vehicle which is presently mortgaged with YL Finance Corporation will be REWARDED. MAKE/TYPE: MITS. ADVENTURE WAGON; MODEL: 1998; CHASSIS NO.: PAEVB5HZLWB002482; MOTOR NO.: 4D56A-J0061; PLATE NO.: WEG197.

Please contact: YL FINANCE, Legal Department at Tel. Nos. 899-9595 or 896-4743.

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- Pasig 628-3695

Quezon City 251-2571

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM
Financial Center, Roxas Blvd.
Pasay City, 1308

INVITATION TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL TO ACT AS AN EXTERNAL FUND MANAGER

The **GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM (GSIS)** invites reputable and expert asset/fund management companies, local or foreign, to submit proposals/bids to manage a portion of the funds of the System.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) for this undertaking may be obtained beginning 10 June 2003 either from the **GSIS Website at www.gsis.gov.ph** or from the office of:

REYNALDO R. NOGRALES
Vice-President
Corporate Finance Accounts Management Services
Level 3, GSIS Building, Roxas Boulevard,
Pasay City
Telephone Number: 551-18-92
Telefax Number: 891-63-46

Bids/Proposals should be submitted to the office of Mr. Nograles on or before 12:00 NN of Wednesday, **18 June 2003.** No bids/proposals shall be accepted after this deadline.

The GSIS reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive any defect(s) or form(s) received and to accept the proposal deemed most beneficial to the System but does not guarantee that an award shall be made. The decision of the System shall be final and binding.

(Sgd.) **WINSTON F. GARCIA**
President and General Manager

(PDI–June 9, 10 & 11, 2003)

PSALM Power Sector Assets & Liabilities Management Corporation
2/F, SGVII Bldg, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, Philippines
(632) 8938202

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), PSALM with office address at 2nd Floor, SGV II Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following requirements:

I. PROJECT NAME : PROCUREMENT OF THIRD PARTY WITNESS TO PERFORMANCE TESTS OF IPP POWER PLANTS

II. BIDDING SCHEDULE : SINGLE STAGE-THREE ENVELOPE SYSTEM

a. PRE-BID CONFERENCE June 23,2003 / PSALM Conference Room 2:00 PM
b. SUBMISSION AND OPENING OF BIDS June 30, 2003 / PSALM Offices / 3:00 P.M.

NOTE: Interested Bidders may request clarifications in writing if unable to attend the pre-bid conference.

III. The complete package of Tender Documents shall be issued to duly licensed proprietors, partnerships or corporations engaged in Engineering and Technical Services who submitted a Letter of Intent to participate in the bidding within seven (7) working days after the last day of advertisement in newspapers and/or posting on DBM/DOE/PSALM Websites of this invitation. Prospective bidders must possess the following minimum qualifications:

1. Must have a minimum three (3) years experience and/or track record, two (2) years of which is in the maintenance and/or testing and commissioning of power plant equipment.
2. Bidder's Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) is at least fifty percent (50%) of the Approved Budget for the Contract.

All interested bidders may secure the bidding documents from the PSALM BAC Secretariat located at the 2nd Floor, SGV II Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City from June 2-23, 2003 after payment of a non-refundable amount of Two Thousand Pesos (P 2,000.00). Inquiries and/or clarifications to the eligibility and bidding requirements may be addressed to the Chairman, BAC at Tel. No. 817-00-37.

IV. PSALM reserves the right to reject any or all bids at any time prior to award of contract, waive any defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation, without thereby incurring, liability whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids; and obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

V. The Approved Budget for the Contract is *Two Million One Hundred Eight Thousand Pesos (P 2,108,000.00)* to be sourced from the Corporate Operating Budget of PSALM

(SGD.) HELEN E. V. SAN PEDRO
Chairman, BAC

(PDI–June 9, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
OFFICE OF THE AVP-BICOL CLUSTER
Naga Branch
SSS Bldg., Concepcion Pequeña, Naga City ☎ (054) 4729792; 473-91-52; 472-00-80 (F)

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and Bid

The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM (SSS) Naga Branch, SSS Bldg., Concepcion Pequena, Naga City is inviting bidders to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid for a two (2) year-contract for janitorial services for the following branches in the Bicol Area:

Janitorial Services for:	Approved Budget for the Contract
Naga(5), Legaspi(2), Daet(1), Iriga(1), Goa(1), Sorsogon(1), Masbate(1), Virac(1) and Tabaco(1)	P1,204,739.40

Application for Eligibility is open to all Janitorial Agencies with at least 5 years experience and with valid license or business permit to undertake the service described herein.

Distribution of Eligibility Requirements to interested bidders will be from **June 4, 2003 to July 9, 2003** by the BAC-Bicol Cluster-Secretariat, OAVP-Bicol Cluster, 2nd Flr., SSS Bldg., Concepcion Pequena, Naga City.

Submission of Eligibility Requirements will be on or before **July 10, 2003** at 2:00 P.M. for screening on a pass/fail criteria to the BAC-Bicol Cluster Secretariat.

Distribution of the Terms of Reference, Bid Proposal Form and Draft of the Proposed Contract will be on **July 11, 2003** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P 500.00.

All eligible bidders issued with bid documents are required to attend the Pre-bidding Conference on **July 18, 2003** at 9:00 A.M. at the Conference Room, OAVP-Bicol Cluster, 2nd Flr., SSS Bldg., Concepcion Pequena, Naga City.

Submission and Opening of duly accomplished Bid Proposal will be on **August 5, 2003** at 9:00 A.M. at the Conference Room, 2nd Flr., SSS Bldg., Concepcion Pequena, Naga City.

The SSS reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any formality or defects and make an award to the proposal most advantageous to the system. The SSS neither assumes any obligation for whatsoever losses that the bidders may incur in the preparation of their bids nor guarantees than an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **MA. TERESA C. IGNACIO**
AVP & Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee
Bicol Cluster

(PDI–June 9, 2003)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) invites authorized distributors/dealers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Acquisition of the following FDC Equipment:

Equipment	Quantity	Approved Budget
Oxygen Permeation Analyzer	1	P 850,000.00
Turbidimeter	1	300,000.00
Gas Chromatograph & Accessories	1	3,500,000.00
Kjeldahl Digestion Unit & Accessories	1	600,000.00
TOTAL		P 5,250,000.00

The schedule of bidding activities is as follows:

June 3 -18, 2003	Issuance and Submission of Registration Requirements
June 4 - 19, 2003	Notification of Registered Bidders
June 20 & 23, 2003	Issuance of Bid Documents
June 25, 2003 (10:00 AM)	Pre-bidding Conference
July 8, 2003 (9:00-10:30 AM)	Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals
(10:45 AM)	Opening of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals

Registration and eligibility requirements can be secured from and submitted to BAC Secretariat, ODAFA, 7th Floor Matimyas Building, 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City. Bidding documents may likewise be secured from BAC Secretariat and the same shall be issued to duly registered bidders upon payment of P2,000.00, non-refundable fee.

NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY REQUIRED FORMALITY IN THE BIDS RECEIVED PROVIDED THAT SUCH WAIVER DOES NOT REFER TO A MAJOR DEVIATION IN A BID AND TO ACCEPT ONLY SUCH BIDS WHICH ARE ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY.

(Sgd.) PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.
Deputy Administrator & Chairman, BAC

(PDI – June 3 & 9, 2003)

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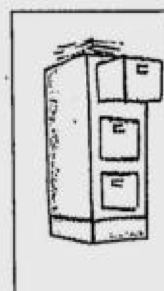

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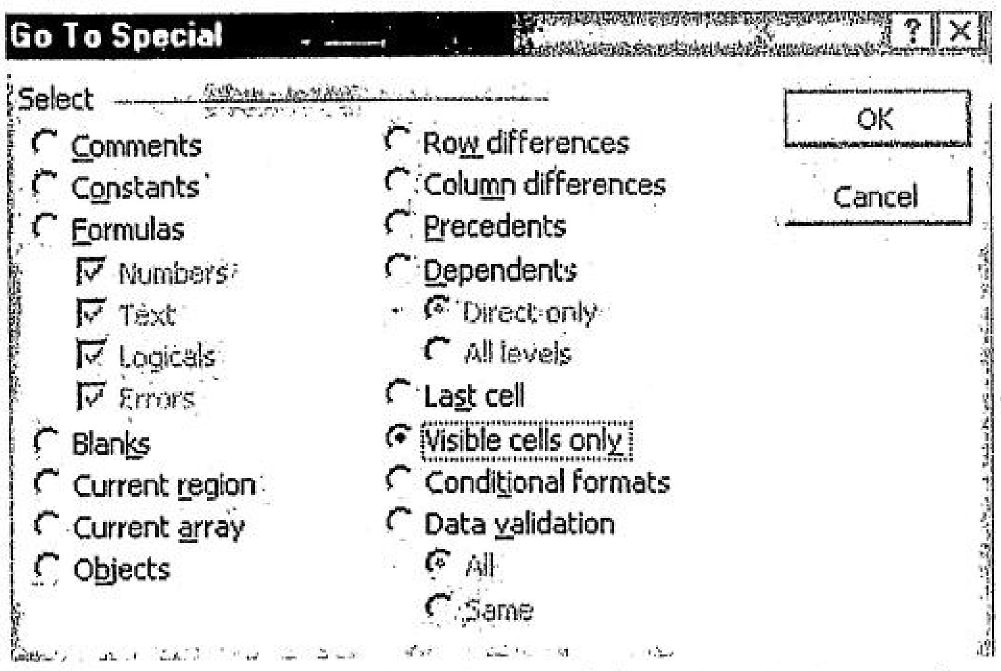

THERE'S a way to copy only the visible cells in your worksheet and transfer them to another. Just click on the "Go to Special" dialog box and make the appropriate selections.

POWERTIPS

By Jerry Liao

LET'S say you have a worksheet with hidden cells and you want to copy only visible cells to another worksheet. Here's how to do it:

1) Open MS Excel and create your worksheet.

2) Select the cells you want to hide.

3) Highlight the cells you want to copy including the hidden cells.

4) Go to "Edit" and choose "Go To" then click the "Special" button.

5) In the "Go To Special" dialog box, select "Visible cells only," then click "OK."

6) Click on the "Copy" icon.

7) Click a cell on a blank worksheet, and click the "Paste" button.

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Even through SMS, GMA insists she won't run in 2004

By Joel D. Pinaroc

"PRES. GMA has said she'll not run for Pres."

This was the exact SMS (short message service) or text message Infotech received from Text GMA, the text messaging service of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. The message was in response to a query asking if Ms Macapagal would run in the 2004 elections.

Despite increased popularity ratings and encouragement from political supporters and even from the business sector that she should run for president in 2004, Ms Macapagal has declared that she is not changing her mind about an extended term as President. This declaration is apparently being echoed by her staff even through the cellular phone via SMS.

With the continuing surge in the number of mobile phone users in the Philippines, the national government has been compelled to integrate mobile communications services in its day-to-day operations.

Heading the move toward SMS

EVEN/B16

Sun Microsystems joins multibillion gaming industry

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

SUN Microsystems is finally jumping into the multibillion-dollar gaming industry, following the creation of a group that will focus on extending Java and Solaris technology into the realm of network gaming.

Sun said in a statement that Chris Melissinos has been appointed chief of the Game Technologies Group.

Melissinos will be the top honcho looking at ways to extend Java and Solaris technology to millions of wired PCs, consoles and mobile devices.

He will also provide the overall vision and strategy for the group.

With massive, multi-player online gaming becoming more popular worldwide, Sun believes that it can simplify development of games for multiple devices using Java technology.

"Java technology is igniting an adrenaline rush in gaming—offering developers the promise of ultra-high performance, truly cross platform gaming with massive market opportunity, and offering end users access to the coolest new games on a tidal wave of new devices," said Jonathan Schwartz, executive vice president of Software at Sun Microsystems.

Sun said that it will work with the open source community in building Java client technologies that will use industry standards, which will allow devices to communicate directly with Sun's game server architecture.

The company will unveil a "significant update" to Javagaming.org during the 2003 JavaOne conference next week.

The newly introduced Video Game Summit at the JavaOne Conference will feature case studies, developer insights, game demos and techniques highlighting the use of Java technology in modern game development, Sun said.

"As the online video game market expands, so do the hurdles and complexities of building online services," said Melissinos. "Sun is in a unique position as we've been developing massively connected environments for years, and we plan to use that knowledge to further the capabilities of the gaming community."

Like Microsoft Corp., Sun's move to the gaming industry shows how traditional computer software makers have gradually moved out of their own niches, and exploring other markets amid the decreasing consumer and enterprise spending on computers.

Microsoft warns users of SMS hoax

MICROSOFT Philippines is warning people about a prank message spreading through short message service (SMS), which proclaims that the receiver has won a Microsoft-sponsored lottery, a local spokesperson told Infotech.

According to Mae Rivera, Microsoft Philippines marketing and communications manager, a certain "Mark Santos" who claims to be from the Communications Department of Microsoft, is congratulating people for winning a Microsoft Office 2003 Special Draw.

Similar to text message hoaxes spamming local subscribers, the message reads: "Congratulations! Your cell number won in the Microsoft Office 2003 Special Draw."

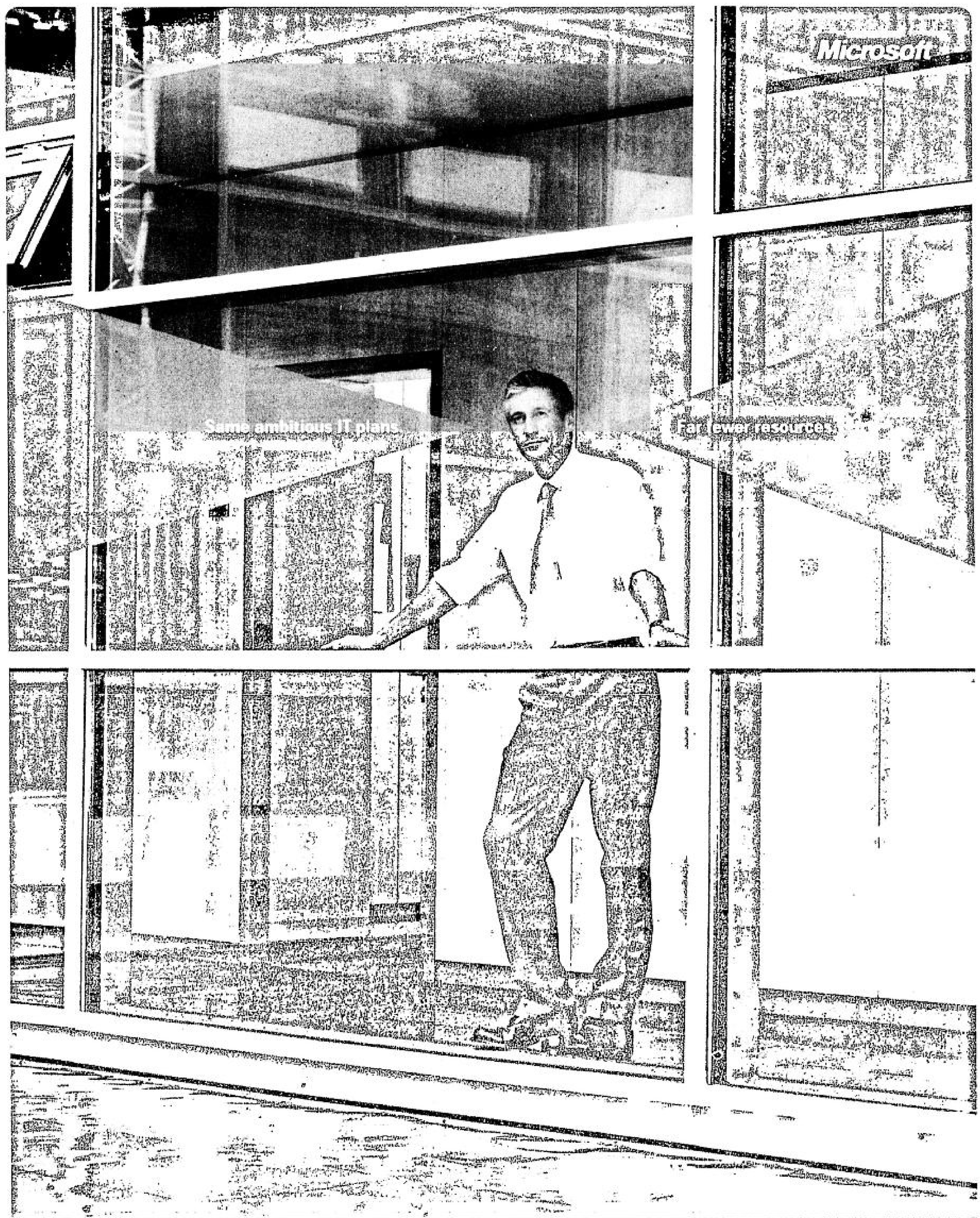
The message goes on to state that the receiver of the SMS has won P920,000 in special prizes. Then it ends with: "This is Mark Santos. Call me up for details."

Rivera noted that gullible callers would then be asked to pay a processing fee amounting to P9,200 to claim the supposed prize.

She also noted that the text message was sent from mobile phone number 0916-277-1100.

Infotech tried calling up the number but only got a network reply that the subscriber is unavailable.

"This message is a hoax. Microsoft does not have a promo on Microsoft Office 2003. Mark Santos is not an employee of Microsoft. We hope you can help us warn people about this scam," Rivera said. *Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva*


Microsoft
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Windows Server 2003 provides many technical advances that help organizations lower total cost of ownership (TCO). The Windows Resource Manager, for example, lets administrators set resource usage (for processors and memory) on server applications and manage them through Group Policy settings. Network-attached storage helps consolidate file services. Other improvements include support for Non-Uniform Memory Access (NUMA), Intel Hyper-Threading technology, and multi-path input/output (I/O), all of which help "scale up" servers.

For more information, visit www.microsoft.com/philippines.

Microsoft Windows Server 2003

Do more with less.

Oracle eyes PeopleSoft at $5.1B

NEW YORK—Software giant Oracle Corp., in a surprise move that shook up the tech sector, announced a $5.1-billion hostile takeover offer for business software maker PeopleSoft.

"The acquisition of PeopleSoft will immediately make Oracle an even more profitable and competitive company," said Oracle chair and chief executive Larry Ellison.

Oracle, which calls itself "the world's largest enterprise software company," specializes in software for the Internet and e-commerce, as opposed to rival Microsoft, which is stronger in consumer software.

ELLISON

Jeff Henley, Oracle executive vice president, said, "Given PeopleSoft's current prospects and plans, we believe our offer presents compelling value to PeopleSoft shareholders. In addition, we expect that the acquisition of PeopleSoft will increase Oracle's earnings per share from the first combined quarter."

Henley added, "We expect there to be substantial cost savings and minimal business integration risk."

The announcement came days after PeopleSoft's announced plans to acquire rival software maker J.D. Edwards for $1.7 billion. Oracle, in a statement, said that deal "is subject to several conditions and is not scheduled to be completed until this fall. Once Oracle's acquisition of PeopleSoft is complete, it will review whether, and on what terms, Oracle would support that transaction."

AFP

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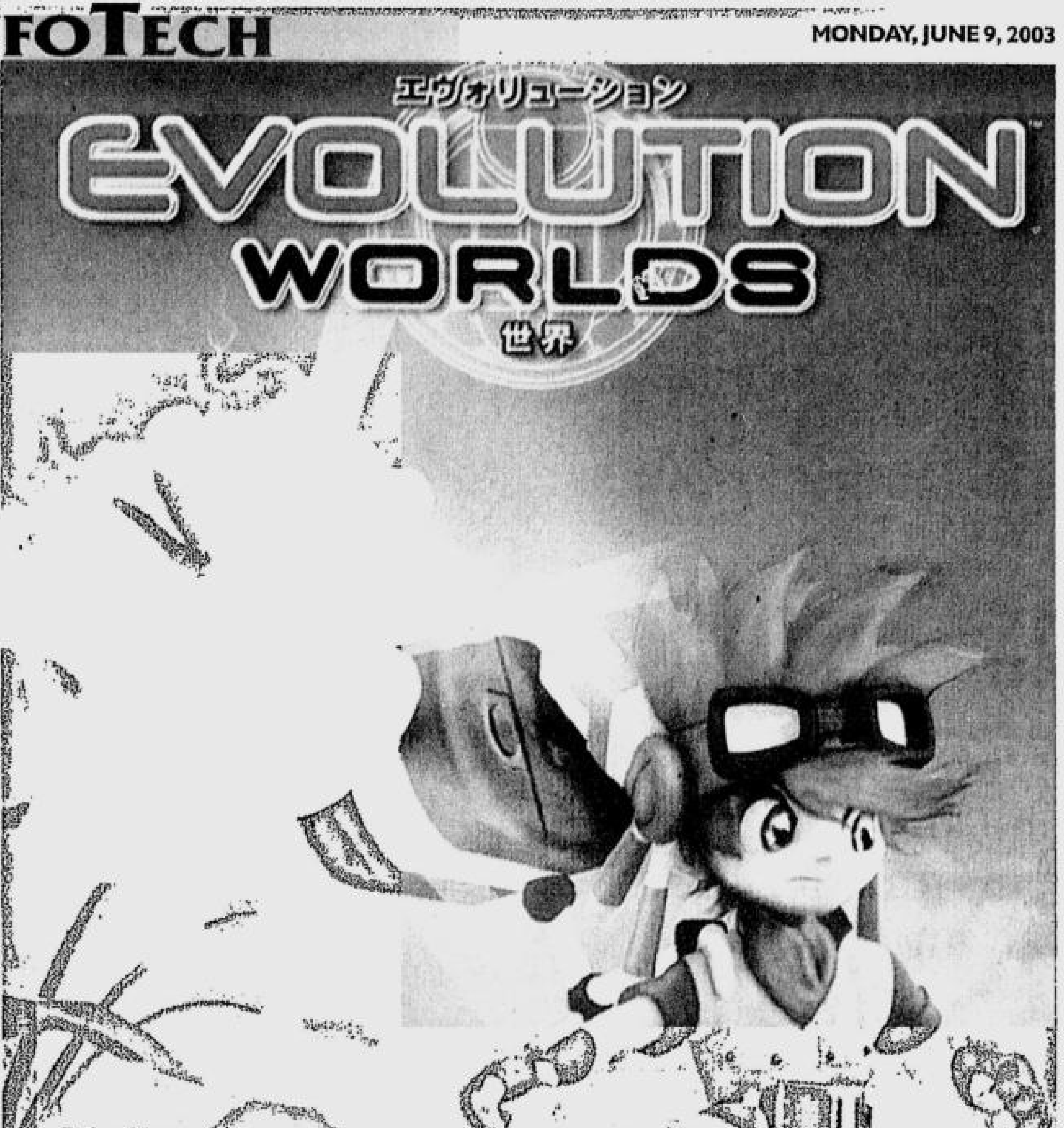

By Leo Magno

AS usual I'll let the kitty out in this review right away. Evolution Worlds is a repetitive dungeon crawl that offers merely an average RPG (role-playing game) experience.

The game requires you to crawl through several floors of a dungeon, collect items and weapons therein, fight the boss at the topmost floor, go back to town to buy upgrades, get another mission, go to a new dungeon, lather, massage vigorously into scalp, rinse and repeat.

Evolution Worlds is about the Launcher family, headed by a boy named Mag who inherited the family's debts. Now he has to go on adventures assigned to him by a research institute called The Society. If he finishes an adventure, he gets paid.

The Launcher family of adventurers has been looking for an ancient artifact called "Evolutia," a so-called cyframe that is believed to be the most powerful weapon in the world. Cyframes are cybernetic weapons attached to the body. They are believed to have been made by an ancient civilization, and it's Mag Launcher's task to look for such items and the ultimate cyframe, Evolutia.

Mag is accompanied by a mysterious girl named Linear Cannon who was entrusted to the Launcher family by Mag's father shortly before he disappeared in one of his adventures. Also joining him is the family butler, Gre Nade. Mag's party is composed of three, so when he goes out on an adventure he has to choose among Gre Nade, Chain Gun and Pepper Box. What's with the gun-related names? Beats me. Later on they'll hook up with another optional party member, a thief called Carcano.

NINTENDO GAMECUBE
We review this game on the GameCube

Evolution Worlds is another port to the Nintendo GameCube from the Sega Dreamcast. It was also the GameCube's first turn-based RPG game in a platform with relatively few RPGs; at the time of Evolution World's release, the only other turn-based RPG around for the Cube was Skies of Arcadia: Legends. The other RPG on the Cube at that time—Lost Kingdoms—had real-time battles.

Turn-based refers to battles wherein a set of characters battle each other by performing actions one after the other. Players on one side choose if they would attack, defend or perform other actions. These preset actions will be played out and the enemies would then perform

EVOLUTION/B18

SMS-based job search introduced

MEDIA giants Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc., INQ7.net, GMA Network Inc. and New Media Inc. will soon allow millions of jobseekers in the Philippines to find jobs using their mobile phones, executives said on Thursday.

The short message service (SMS) or text-based system will give 19 million Filipino mobile phone subscribers direct access to employment opportunities posted on both Jobmarket—a job placement section of the INQUIRER—and Job Market Online, the online counterpart of Jobmarket, executives added.

Dubbed "Kapuso Jobmarket," the text messaging service will initially offer job search features, as well as job alerts to all registered users.

"This is a public service more than a commercial venture," said Judd Gallares, president and chief operating officer of New Media Inc.

With the current unemployment rate in the country, the media firms said that the service extends the offline content of both Jobmarket and Job Market Online to jobseekers via their mobile phones.

"This is just the beginning," said Paolo Prieto, INQ7.net president. "This is just one way of getting out our online content to job seekers who are now used to texting."

For advertisers of the INQUIRER and INQ7.net, the service will eventually extend the offline job postings to a more targeted audience.

"We will offer this as an extra service to our advertisers," said Donald Lim, assistant vice president for marketing of the INQUIRER.

Even through SMS, GMA insists . . .

From page B15

governance is the Office of the President which is using several mobile numbers that, according to government officials, can be used by the public to reach Ms Macapagal herself. The Text GMA service is accessible via any of the following numbers; 0917-8398462, 0917-8985462, 0917-8982462, 0919-8984621, 0919-8984622, 0919-8984623.

However, when Infotech sent a message to four of the six numbers above, we only got two replies 18 hours later. One was the statement that she would not run for president in 2004 and the other seemed like a standard automated reply: "Thank you for texting TEXTGMA. Message noted. Have a nice day."

The government has a good reason to open up another communication line via SMS as the number of mobile phone subscribers has now reached almost 20 million in a population of 80 million.

Mobile phones are thus expected to surpass further the number of telephone landlines, which a few years back were hard to get and perceived to be expensive. Mobile phones on the other hand are cheap and can be activated in a matter of minutes after purchase.

Other government offices are following suit in the use of SMS for public service. The Department of Health, the Metro Manila Development Authority and most recently the National Computer Center have also used SMS-powered public query lines along with the traditional telephone "hotline."

The NCC recently announced that through its own SMS service, people can direct their queries and suggestions about the agency by using their mobile phones and texting their messages to 2960.

The DOH also had to deploy more communication lines following the identification of individuals in the Philippines afflicted with Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome or SARS. The DOH is using a single mobile number (0916-466-5823) which will be used in SARS-related information dissemination and queries.

The MMDA for its part is hoping that through SMS, it can better manage traffic in Metro Manila, which has the distinction of having one of the most traffic-clogged road systems in the world.

Along with its traditional landlines and two-way radios, the MMDA has tapped mobile operators in offering its SMS service to motorists and the public in general. It is currently using 2947 for Globe and 288 for Smart which the public can use.

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Software makers say . . .

From page B18

prices in the Philippines because we adopt the English version pricing model. The price of the software has been made standard for all English-speaking countries. But for localized versions, prices are lower," Rivera said.

For his part, Lei Salcedo, country manager of Computer Associates Philippines also said that the company follows a standard pricing that is global since it is a global firm. But it does have special prices for schools.

Recently, though, Salcedo said that the enterprise software maker has introduced a new licensing model that aims to attract enterprise customers to purchase their software, and somehow discourage piracy.

Dubbed the flex-select model, he said that companies can now purchase its software licenses and pay them on a monthly, quarterly, or even yearly basis.

"This is something revolutionary in the software industry," added Salcedo.

But unlike Microsoft, Computer Associates targets enterprise customers that are more cautious of using pirated software.

Meanwhile, Rivera said that it is possible that a Filipino version of Microsoft software products could be priced lower than the English version.

She said that this has been the case in China and other countries that use other language versions of Microsoft's products.

Rivera pointed out that there have been efforts to adjust pricing locally, if software products are bought in bulk by schools and government.

She said that Microsoft do give discounts to schools and government if they decide to buy in volume.

"We do give a lot of discounts if they buy in bulk. Discounts could go up to more than 50 percent off the retail price for academic licensing," Rivera added.

Microsoft has also a volume licensing scheme, where discounts are given when people decide to buy at least five licenses.

The Philippine government, through the Department of Budget and Management, last year signed a select-licensing agreement with Microsoft, giving local agencies as much as 70-percent discounts on bulk purchases of certain software products, Microsoft officials said previously.

Microsoft, which has been traditionally strong in the desktop software market, however, noted that comparing its pricing model with that of the music and movie industry is like comparing apples to oranges.

Rivera said that Microsoft is spending billions (at least $5 billion in fiscal year 2002) on research and development of its software products.

So the company has to recoup its investment through the consumers, she added.

Asked to describe how the software company prices their products, Rivera said that it would be difficult to know.

"I wouldn't be able to know how large a chunk would go to research and development. The optical media itself does not represent a large part of the total cost. Total cost includes packaging and intellectual property. That is a question that is hard to answer," Rivera said. "In a sense, the money that we spend for research and development adds up to the cost of the software. But the pirates are not bearing that cost."

Microsoft also insisted that its prices have not gone up, especially with the introduction of Windows XP.

The Windows XP operating system currently retails for about P13,000 for the Home edition, while an upgrade costs around P6,800. For the Windows XP Professional edition, retail price starts at around P19,000 while an upgrade costs around P13,000.

Solon urges: Drop . . .

From page B18

stressed that software companies should also make adjustments in a market where people have lesser disposable income.

"Consumers may have the explosion of pirated disks to thank for the downward price spiral of music CDs and movie VCDs and DVDs. This is because the entertainment industry has opted to fight back and be more competitive by effecting huge discounts in many of their products," Oreta said.

She pointed out that movie VCDs sell for as low as P100 apiece down from P400, while DVDs sell for P350, down from around P800. Distributors of music CDs also followed suit, as they brought down prices to P200 to P250 each from P400 up to P700 apiece.

Oreta said that the business software industry, which is reeling from losses amounting to P2 billion (as of 2002 figures by the Business Software Alliance), should contend with the truth that Filipino consumers refuse to spend on original commercial software if pirated ones are available.

"Why will a netizen fork over P3,000 to P4,000 for say, a complete Microsoft XP program, of which many components he may have no use for anyway, when he can buy an abridged, if pirated, one at Greenhills for a mere P100," she said.

Oreta said that the business software industry should consider offering "incentives," such as hefty price discounts, to encourage consumers to patronize original computer programs over pirated, "in the same way that the entertainment industry has chosen to be more competitive by slashing their prices by half."

Oreta is currently the Senate committee head on public information and mass media. She and other 16 other senators are now pushing for a measure to regulate optical media in the Philippines.

Optical media includes VCDs, CDs, DVDs, among others, which are now being used by pirates to distribute illegal software, movies and music.

Optical media technology and other related technologies have made unlawful and wholesale reproduction of copyrighted works easier for syndicated pirates.

Oreta pointed out that pirates can now duplicate contents of a CD in four seconds, while replicating machines can now make as much as 60,000 copies in one continuous run.

She said that these "hot" copies cost no more than P15 apiece.

In a related development, Microsoft Corp. chief executive Steve Ballmer finally acknowledged recently in an internal office memo, which was leaked to media, that open source software that costs less than commercial software is threatening their business.

In his e-mail memorandum, Ballmer pointed out that Linux and OpenOffice, a freely distributed office suite, pose a significant challenge to the software maker, as technology spending continues to decline and noncommercial software continues to make headway in enterprise markets.

Magsaysay urges Congress to study Comelec automation

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

AMID CONTROVERSIES surrounding the modernization program of the Commission on Elections (Comelec), a lawmaker recently filed a resolution seeking an "omnibus inquiry and study" of the P3-billion project, Infotech learned recently.

In a resolution submitted to the Senate, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. urged Congress to look into the status of the poll body's modernization project, saying that Filipino citizens have the right to know the status of the computerization program and the preparations being undertaken by the poll body.

Magsaysay also filed a separate resolution asking Congress to study the Comelec's initiatives to purge the current computerized voters' list.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos said that the poll body has purged about 300,000 names of people from the voters' list in Metro Manila.

The poll body began purging the computerized voters' list since last month, according to Magsaysay.

Magsaysay noted that the Comelec has decided to invalidate the voters' list in precincts from the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, starting with areas in Tawi-Tawi, Sulu and Maguindanao provinces.

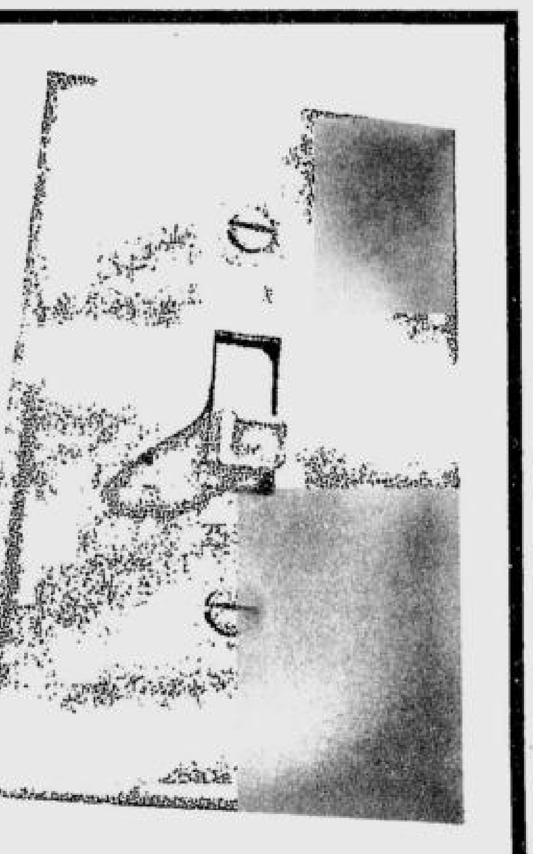
The Comelec said that the purging of names in the voters' list in these areas was due to alleged massive padding of the list, according to reports reaching the poll body.

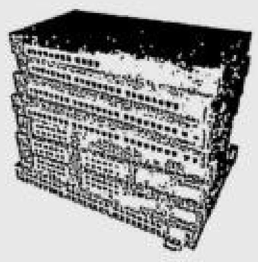
Meanwhile, Magsaysay proposed that the Comelec publish the list of voters online, specifically on its website to ensure "transparency and accessibility" via the Internet.

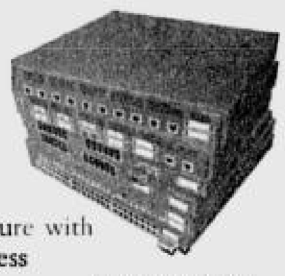
Magsaysay said that the Comelec has already piloted the online posting of the list of voters in the National Capital Region. This area has more than five million voters.

The pilot effort resulted in the purging of close to 34,000 multiple and fictitious registrants in the region, added the lawmaker.

MAGSAYSAY







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INFOTECH

Solon urges: Drop software prices

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

A LAWMAKER who has penned a measure to regulate optical media in the Philippines has urged software makers to follow the model of the entertainment industry, which has placed discounts on video products to attract consumers to buy original copies.

Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta pointed out that Filipino consumers started buying original movies and music distributed using CD, VCD and DVD formats when prices were brought down to a certain point.

Oreta noted that while she is supporting a measure to address software piracy, she

SOLON/B17

ORETA

Software makers say pricing model standard worldwide

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

REACTING to a call by Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta to lower the price of software, Microsoft Corp. and Computer Associates said their pricing models in the Philippines follow a global standard, but insisted that they have initiated efforts to bring down prices over the years.

For Microsoft Corp., English versions of its software products follow a standard pricing model worldwide to discourage the practice of parallel importation, said Mae Rivera, marketing communications manager of Microsoft Philippines.

Parallel importation usually involves organizations or individuals buying certain products from another country where it is less expensive. These products are then sold in another country, where the same product is already available. The practice, although discouraged, essentially allows companies to resell these products at lower prices.

"There are a lot of things we have to take into consideration when it comes to pricing our products.

"One concern is the practice of parallel importation. It's hard to actually lower our

SOFTWARE/B17

Evolution Worlds

From page B16

their individual moves. Whoever runs out of health points first is the big, fat loser.

A major difference between Evolution Worlds and other RPGs is that, while dungeon crawling, the player will be able to see the enemies milling around, unless you've made a turn and the camera view is obscured in the tight, top-down view of the dungeon. Other RPGs have random encounters—you don't know when you'd be in for a fight. In Evolution Worlds, you can choose to evade an enemy or catch him from behind, in which case you'd have the advantage of a surprise attack, giving you the first two rounds of attacks on the enemy.

Mag and his company can learn special moves as they gain experience points, and upgrades to his cyframe can be bought from town. The moves are varied and interesting—from Linear whacking enemies with a frying pan of all things, to Gre the butler serving hors d'oeuvres that would confuse the enemy. The characters have different strengths, and you can always retreat to the insertion point to change your party composition.

The game has a good battle grid where you can position combatants in a 3-by-3 area. Players in the front row deal maximum damage but also take a lot of damage, while players at the back receive minimal damage but also deal weak damage points. The middle row is the safest. However, enemies can pull you back or forward to frustrate your tactics, unless you're wearing special items like heavy boots or mystical lockets.

The battle mechanics, however, contain the first weakness of the game. Battles are too easy to even bother with special moves, and health items are cheap in town and are found in large quantities in the dungeons to even worry about expiring in battle. In fact, after battling about 10 bosses in the game, I only failed with Yurka, whom I had to battle three times to defeat. All the rest were down in a single try. It's just a matter of dealing special attacks, healing or reviving the characters with big guns, and waiting for the right moment to attack once the characters are fully powered up. However, unlike other turn-based battles where a life indicator tells you when the boss is about to go down, Evolution Worlds keeps you guessing how many damage points you have to deal the enemy. One of them needed 22,000 damage points to go down, while the other needed 38,000 (really huge considering the first boss goes down with 1,000 damage points). But you'll never know until you actually beat the boss and count the accumulated number of damage points you dealt him.

The GameCube version of this game, published by Sega and under license to Ubi Soft, contains parts one and two of Evolution for the Dreamcast melded into one game. In part one, Mag and company start off in Pannam town to face off with Prince Eugene of the 8th Imperial Army. Prince Eugene is a disturbing character with pedophiliac undertones. The second part sees them traveling to Museville where the mysterious and geekily-clad Yurka closes the loop and reveals the secrets of Evolutia. It took me 28 hours and six minutes to finish the game with a "B" ranking.

Also, Evolution Worlds has a decent soundtrack and the voice acting is better than most games out there. The original Dreamcast games had dialogue boxes in them with no speech, but Evolution Worlds on the Cube has the characters talking appropriately. However, you don't need to finish the rest of the dialogue since reading them in the box is faster.

Another thing which might turn off gamers is the "cutesy" anime style of the game. If you don't mind big-eyed, colorful, anime-style graphics, Evolution Worlds wouldn't bother you. Others might find the game's graphics—along with the overly simplistic battle mechanics and item management—too "kiddy."

Veteran RPG players will not have fun with this one, but Evolution Worlds could be a good start for younger turn-based RPG beginners.

EVOLUTION Worlds offers an average role-playing experience

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Be more daring, the economy has armor

By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor

WHEN your company is low on cash, decisions tend to be conservative. But when you have a stockpile of assets tucked away, it's time to take the big leaps to high growth. Now scale up this thinking to the national level.

The latest data confirm that the Philippine economy is resilient, for it performs respectably during the globe's rough seasons. Other countries are reeling from the deflation in Europe, the slowdown in the United States, the recession in Japan, and the big chill caused by SARS.

Despite all these, the Philippines posted 1st quarter growth rates of 4.5 percent for gross domestic product (GDP) and even 5.6 percent for gross national product (GNP). This level-headedness was seen even during the Asian crisis of 1997-1999.

Bedrock of stability

This piece will explain the economy's body armor, its source of resiliency.

It will then look into the opportunities for high growth.

The main driver for the economy is not investment or government spending or exports. It is personal consumption. This category dominates all others:

It is equal to 76 percent of gross domestic product. The large share of consumption is the main reason why the Philippines tends to post steady growth even when her neighbors get into GDP trouble.

The country has a wide and reliable base of demand to which enterprises cater. It is the fallback option when incomes from abroad are squeezed.

Other Asian nations have smaller domestic markets and have to be highly dependent on exports. Volatile shifts in the global economy can be deadly for them.

Consumption, remittances

The second component of the body armor is the service sector. Incomes from services make up 46 % of GDP, compared with 33 % for industry and 21 % for agriculture. Services also absorb the biggest chunk of employment: 47 %, compared with 37% for agriculture and a mere 16% for industry. As the nation develops, the agricultural sector continues to shed labor. Industry is not growing fast enough to absorb these workers, so the service sector takes them in.

The third component is made of remittances from overseas Filipino workers (OFWs). GNP is basically GDP plus remittances. It is well known that remittances from overseas workers are huge: the inflow of "net factor income from abroad" grew by 21% during the 1st quarter of the year. In 2002 the amount was almost as large as government spending.

Revenues from OFWs are safe and reliable because the workers are not concentrated along a few countries. Rather, Filipinos are

BE MORE/ B2-2

TANCO

FROM IT TO NURSES

'Businesses need to make goods that sell'

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WHEN businessman Eusebio H. Tanco bought into one of the country's largest computer schools in late 2002, he had already made up his mind that STI could be bigger than its current niche.

Within a decade, Tanco says the STI Education Services Group (STI-ESG) will churn out more nurses, teachers, engineers, and accountants than computer professionals.

The London School of Economics-trained Tanco says STI is no different from his other business interests such as in yarn spinning or container handling.

"A business should produce goods that sell in the market," Tanco says. "If it doesn't, what's the point?"

In the face of the dot-com bust and slumping sales of consumer electronic products, Tanco says it would be foolish to focus only on training IT professionals when the market was hankering for nurses and teachers particularly those that are computer-savvy. He says STI not only had to shift gears but it also had to do it fast.

Among the first non-IT sector that STI ventured into was nursing because of the huge projected shortfall in manpower in the coming years. In the US alone, demand for hospital nurses is expected to grow to 2.382 million in the next three years according to the US Bureau of Health Professions.

Tanco says other countries such as the UK, Singapore, Ireland, Canada, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait were also likely to have a big gap in their healthcare requirements.

Tanco engineered the firm's takeover of De Los Santos Colleges which enabled STI to hit the ground running in healthcare education. STI is poised to acquire or merge with three more nursing colleges this year to accelerate its expansion.

Tanco says STI also plans to put up a course for a Masters degree to produce more experts in the field (whose ranks have thinned due to higher pay abroad) that would oversee the training of future nurses. "We cannot produce more nursing graduates if we don't have enough, capable teachers in our classrooms," Tanco said.

Aside from nursing, Tanco said STI-ESG has already integrated an education course in some of its schools, It also plans to establish an accounting school in cooperation with SGV & Co by next year.

After taking care of the product, Tanco says STI's next concern was to find the right channels to deploy its graduates and determine what the market wanted.

STI hooked up with Tanco's overseas recruitment and staffing agency, GROW Inc., that would recruit, select, and deploy nurses and teachers. Tanco said GROW provides job matching, immigration processing, and preparatory programs that allow its candidates to comply with certification and eligibility requirements of countries such as the US, UK, and Canada.

In its first-full year of operations, Tanco expects STI-ESG to deploy 1,500 nurses, 500 IT professionals and 500 schoolteachers to the US.

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Philippine LGU debt market: 5 years after

(Second of two parts)

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Jesus Tirona

THE DEVELOPMENT process has not been easy. In the few years since LGUGC was formed, it has witnessed two administrations that initially did not want to honor the obligations of their predecessors.

LGUGC was also perceived as an undercapitalized development institution competing with the bigger GFIs. There was little appreciation for the fact that LGUGC was not into direct lending. It is rather a catalyst, an enhancer which lends its name to the LGUs and gearing on its capital is common among these types of institutions.

Capital adequacy, prudential limits on leveraging, integrity of management and the board and the implementation of workable loan and guarantee guidelines make a credible guarantor.

Due diligence and eventual project monitoring have accounted for a zero default rate given the P1.7 billion in bonds floated thus far.

Given an economic environment that continues to be none-too-ideal for capital development, LGUGC has, within its limitations, indeed narrowed the gap between the LGUs and the private sources of capital.

The market players have identified additional viable LGU projects requiring funding and this will translate to some P2.5 billion in guarantees extended by year-end. If realized, this portfolio would reflect a leveraging of about 8.7x on its equity base, but excluding unrealized earnings, it is still quite conservative by international standards.

Corporate strengthening

As it performs its yeoman's role, LGUGC has not been remiss in improving its capacity to cover more grounds.

First on its priority list is the improvement of its capital base by attracting domestic as well as prospective foreign equity partners to augment its fund base.

The indigenous insurance and pension funds would represent a natural source of long-term investments either in the form of equity or as investors in LGU debt instruments. Tapping a foreign entity strong in public finance would also be logical for LGUGC to pursue.

In the meantime, as an interim measure, the LGUGC had entered into a co-guarantee agreement with the US Agency for International Development (USAID) where the latter undertakes to cover up to 30 percent of credit risks of a qualified LGU borrower up to a maximum $8.55 million.

Certainly, this arrangement boosts LGUGC's capacity to guarantee and definitely affirms its credibility not only in the eyes of the foreign donor agencies but also of the domestic capital market. In fact, the LGUGC has been cited as one of the successful development models for the 21st century.

It was also named as one of the Six Best Practices of USAID-DCA in August 2002.

To ensure sustainability, LGUGC devoted time and money to firm up its risk evaluation tools. Its internal screening and rating system has been rehashed. With computerized systems in place this early, LGUGC expects to improve its risk management capability and be able to reasonably justify higher gearing ratios without compromising actuarial soundness.

Appraisals on construction costs are now done during the evaluation stages of a guarantee application. When construction is ongoing, a project monitoring board is constituted to track construction progress through an independent engineer.

The financials are likewise tracked to ensure that timely deposits are being made to the sinking fund for eventual debt servicing. Once the construction phase is done, the project revenues this time are tracked, again to ensure that funds are made available to meet maturing bond obligations.

What needs to be done

It is generally conceded that financing needs of LGUs cannot be satisfied solely by the pool of GFIs, and that PFIs could be made to tap the capital market to fund LGU projects that will spur economic activities especially in the countryside.

Yet the marketplace prescribes several conflicting guidelines issued by various national government agencies (NGA). These guidelines may be a consequence of the NGAs' effort to protect territories but these create bottlenecks in the bond development process and do more harm than good.

This therefore underscores the need for a more coherent national policy.

To begin with, perhaps now is the time to rationalize the entire LGU universe, classify them in terms of current resource base and potential and identify the financial institutions best suited to deliver credits.

This could either come in the form of grants, loan with grant component, straight loans, or funds sourced through the capital market for the more endowed LGUs.

Parallel to a market segmentation is the liberalization of the depository arrangement for LGUs. The national government must level the playing field in the LGU debt market by considering allowing PFIs to compete for LGU deposits freely.

This would enable the PFIs to act as bond trustees for LGU bonds with ease, enable them to offer better yields, and lower the debt cost to LGUs due to improved account profitability made possible through compensating balances.

The LGU debt market can be vibrant if investors can be granted some incentives which may include a tax break in income and in documentary stamp tax on primary issues at least.

One realizes that the timing of such incentives comes at a time when the national government is hard pressed to collect the right amount of taxes. But the potential loss of tax revenues may easily be offset by the volume of bond transactions and the resulting economic activities at the grassroots levels.

Finally, the institutionalization of all bond market players is key to the development of a secondary market for LGU bonds. The need for an independent rating organization and a credible bond counsel cannot be overemphasized.

These key roles will pave the way for the LGUs' entry into the national fixed income exchange that the private sector is establishing shortly.

Call to bond market partners

All told, the past five years saw the beginning of an LGU debt market - generically referred to as "municipal" bonds—that is first in Asia.

A bond portfolio of P1.7 billion today is a pittance compared to the trillions of dollars in municipals that characterize the US bond market.

But the modest effort is enough to inspire the market players to continue working as one and aim for the emergence of a secondary market for LGU bonds as soon as practically possible. But to begin with, policy makers and market players must begin to move as one. It cannot be otherwise. *(The author is a member of the Management Association of the Philippines and President and CEO of LGU Guarantee Corp. The MAP Secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globenet.com.ph)*

You can avoid corruption in an ODA project

By Juan Escandor Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

TIGAON, Camarines Sur—Breakthroughs in the implementation of a Danish-assisted $15-million water system development project in 10 out of the 35 towns in Camarines Sur have been achieved here even as the project has yet to be completed this November.

For one, the Danish International Development Agency (Danida) and the Partido Development Administration (PDA) have agreed on two things:

- The absence of actual fund transfer from a foreign financing agency to a loan recipient;
- The participation of both parties from the pre, actual and post- implementation phases of the project.

These practices have not been done by other ODA assisted projects.

Officially dubbed "Mixed Credit Facility of the Danish Government," the project is designed to centralize operation of potable water distribution in the whole Third District of Camarines Sur. It is the first of its kind in the country today.

Unlike other ODA projects where loans are disbursed through regular government channels, the $15-million mixed credit facility (MCF), which comes in the form of a commercial loan from ABN Amro Bank of The Netherlands, is transferred directly on installment to the Kruger-Partido Water Consortium, a Danish-Filipino consortium, and project contractor.

The Danida stands only as guarantor of the PDA in relation to the commercial loan that the ABN Amro Bank has provided.

Corruption-free

Apparently, the Danish government has the intention to address corruption that bugs most of the government infrastructure projects in the Philippines.

It worked on eliminating the environment that can breed graft and corruption.

No dollar is transferred to the PDA at the period of fund utilization.

But the Danish-Filipino consortium has to comply with certain process before the ABN Amro Bank transfers funds to their bank accounts.

The engineers of the PDA and Ramboll have to conduct separate and independent validation of the accomplishment applied for billing.

The PDA and Ramboll have to be in consensus that the accomplishment submitted have been actually complied with.

Only then, can a "notice of drawdown," an instrument to transfer project funds, be issued to the project contractors that they transmit to ABN Amro Bank.

"The scheme and processes of mixed credit facility have gone a long way after the PDA frustratingly realized how much one government corporate entity pays a regular government ODA loan channel in interest payments," San Jose sighed.

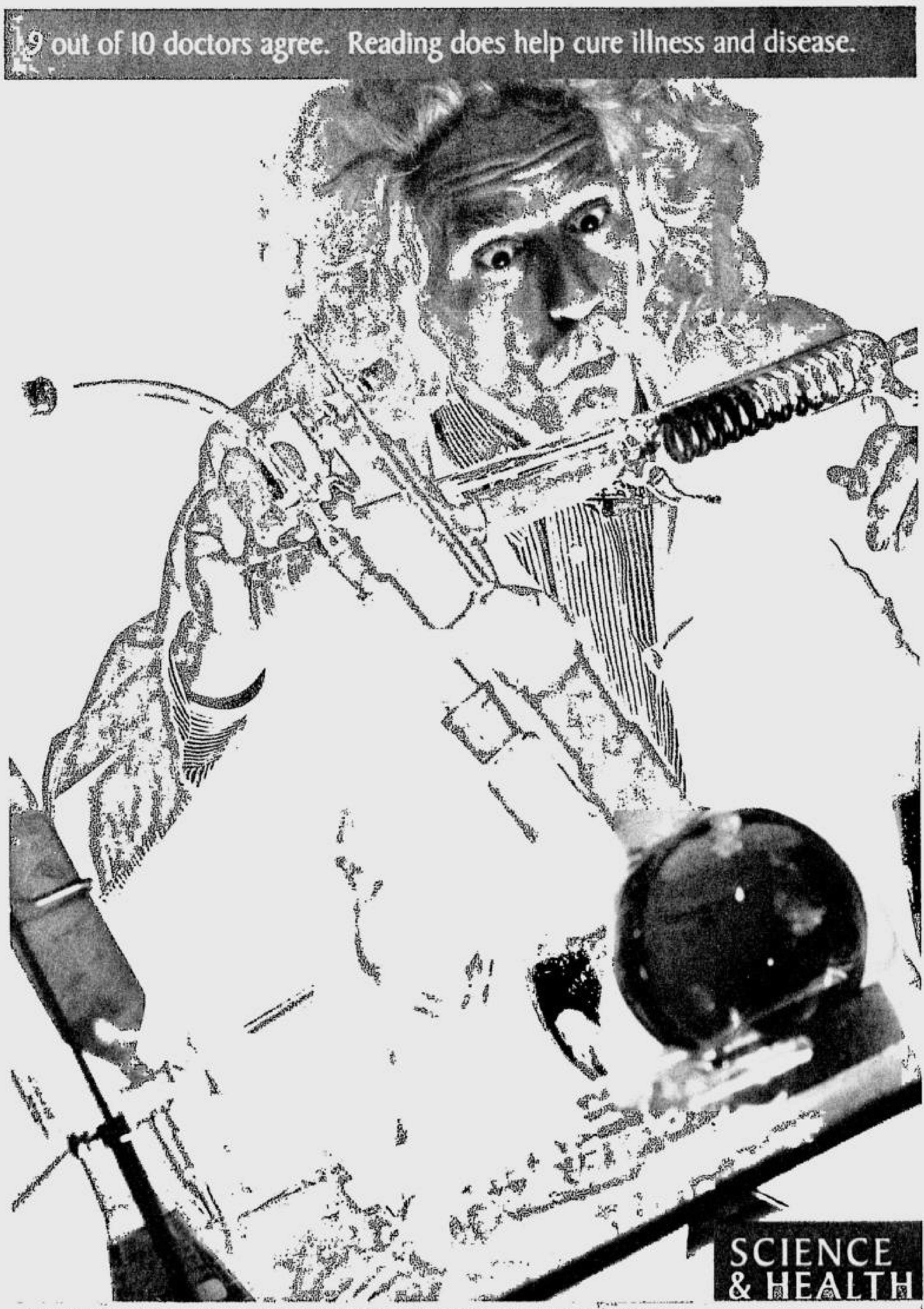
NPA taxation

One of the most important breakthroughs that the execution of the project has achieved was its successful negotiation with the communist rebels who demanded 10 percent revolutionary tax.

San Jose said the communist rebels were convinced to withdraw their demand after he showed them documents that it is impossible for them to pocket money from the project funds because actual funds are not transferred to the PDA coffers.

He said the communist rebels

YOU/ B2-3



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From page B2-1

deployed in more than 170 nations.

These three, consumption, the service sector, and remittances, comprise the economy's giant body armor. They allow the Philippines to post steady growth even in global downturns. What sectors then can power the nation to rapid growth?

Telecoms, star performer

One is telecommunications. The star player for services, the fastest growing field, is the sector that includes telecoms. Its growth rate was 8.6 percent as of the 1st quarter of 2003. The rates were similarly high in 2001 (8.8%) and 2002 (8.9%). A few giant firms reap the fruits of telecom's growth, so the challenge is to find the means to disperse it to a wider section of the population.

The other growth highway is exports. The exchange rate will be more lucrative to exporters over the next months and years. The peso will continue to fall against the dollar, though probably not as fast as an investment bank predicts.

The peso will still fall

Check out the trade data to see why. Imports have exceeded exports for practically the whole life of the Philippines. In fact the excess of imports over exports has been widening in real terms over the last three years.

Below are the trade deficits (imports minus exports) in billions of 1985 pesos.

1998	P116.788
1999	89.918
2000	41.416
2001	60.442
2002	70.060

Exports bring in dollars while imports leak them out. There are more imports than exports, so the dollars will continue to leak out, making the available supply scarce in peso terms. The peso will still fall.

But won't the outflow of dollars be canceled by the inflow from OFW remittances? Actually the trade deficit is greater than the remittances.

In fact the level of net remittances is equal to just 20 percent of exports and 15 percent of imports. Can't the government borrow more dollars? Yes, but debt-driven growth is not sustainable. More stable foreign exchange from tourism and direct investment would help.

Get into exports

When will the peso's slide stop? When dollars from exports, remittances, tourism and investments exceed the outflow from imports, then will the local currency strengthen over the long haul.

This is a cue for more firms to get into exports, call centers, and outsourcing contracts, because the rates will continue to be lucrative.

Comments to darroyo @ philonline.com

In this burger chain, women outnumber men

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES' largest corporations would unfailingly declare that women have as much chance as their male counterparts to take on the highest positions in the corporate hierarchy.

A quick look at the management committees of many of these companies, however, would reveal that males still dominate their highest policy-making bodies.

ANNIE Masancay, VP for controllership

There may be more women in their payroll but most are still relegated to the traditional "female" jobs such as secretarial or clerical positions.

Jollibee Foods Corp., the country's largest and most profitable fast food company, is not one of these companies.

Robert T. Poblete, Jollibee vice president for human resources development, says almost half of its management committee members are women.

"This is higher than normal because in other companies there are may be just one or two members in their highest committee," Poblete says.

He, however, stresses that there is no deliberate attempt to hire women for these top positions for appearances' sake.

Poblete says Jollibee simply screens men and women up for promotion based on the same criteria.

Some women are better than the men for certain positions, while some men beat women on others.

Gone are the days when women were automatically judged as unable to carry out certain tasks such as traveling or going to far-flung places because of the demands of their family life.

This explains why as many as 8 out of 11 of Jollibee's district operations managers are women.

Each district operation manager takes care of between 45 and 60 stores across the Philippines.

The store manager—male or female—is evaluated based on the sales targets.

Belen O. Rillo, VP for commissary

"Because a store manager is hired to achieve the store's targets, there's no differentiation in terms of gender when it comes to performance," he says.

"Again it was not deliberate. It just happened that way. Perhaps it is because of the nature of the job because operations mean going into minute details and some say that women are more attentive to detail," Poblete says.

Jollibee figures showed that overall, Jollibee has four percent more women than men.

There are more women in the main office and store operations divisions, while men outnumber women in the commissary because most of the jobs require physical efforts such as in the production and logistics departments.

On the supervisory level, Jollibee has six female vice presidents heading the commissary, controllership, marketing, purchasing, research and development and Metro Manila.

This number is a little more compared to other companies of the same size and profitability.

Poblete also says that Jollibee has a strict policy against sexual harassment, saying that this behavior undermines the good working relationship among the company's employees.

"We require managers to go through a gender sensitivity program from the Labor department so that they would be aware. We also tell them ourselves how they should act because they are managers now," Poblete says.

Jollibee also considers it a violation of its sexual harrassment policy if a person is punished, reprimanded or discriminated upon for revealing concerns about sexual harassment.

Having this kind of policy of sexual equality, Poblete adds, encourages more women to seek out higher positions because they know that they can be considered based solely on their competence.

"In our present times, as proven in many aspects, women are seen to be as equally capable as men, setting aside the biological difference of both sexes. The company implements the competency program, where the ability and qualification on the job matters, rather than gender," Poblete says.

INEZ Reyes, VP for marketing

You ...

From page B2-2

seemed to know very well how much money goes into the pockets of corrupt government officials.

San Jose said they kept from public knowledge the demand of the communist rebels and the negotiations conducted for security reasons and in the interest of project completion.

After all, involving the military or exposing the communist rebels during that critical period of the project implementation would endanger the project and their lives.

With the success in the application of new schemes and processes of the MCF, the PDA is faced with challenges on how to maintain truly affordable water services for the poor constituents of the 10 towns here.

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1998	BMW 316i	Arktis Silver	55Tk	780,000.00	Sold
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1998	BMW 320iA	Arktis Gray	60Tk	690,000.00	
2002	BMW 318iA M-sport	Black Sapphire	10Tk	1,975,000.00	Sale Pending
1997	BMW 523iA	Canyon Red	40Tk	1,550,000.00	
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Son follows dad's path of hardwork and 'public spirit'

ANTHONY Dee believes businesses must have a social conscience.

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

MABALACAT, Pampanga—Like most businessmen, Anthony Dee is out to make a profit. But only when it comes to his Datelcom Corp. and its nine telephone systems in Pampanga and Bulacan.

As for his 400-bed capacity Dee Hwa Liong Foundation Medical Center and Dee Hwa Liong Foundation College with 175 classrooms, the 53-year-old Filipino-Chinese businessman says this is his way of "carrying out social responsibility."

The foundation, established in memory of his father, Dee Hwa Liong, known also as Cao Pek, was set up eight years ago.

After doing a number of charitable projects and sending an increasing number of scholars to school, the foundation put up the school three years ago. The hospital followed a few months ago and is already being expanded into a six-storey building with a capacity of 600 beds.

"These are very expensive to operate and maintain but I am happy helping people. It's not the money and it's not politics (that I'm after)," he explains.

The hospital is touted to be the first of its kind in Central and Northern Luzon so cancer patients and their caregivers need not travel to Metro Manila for treatment.

Dee says the "foundation's spirit of social conscience" began with his father.

"He asked me why I was not involved in socio-civic projects. I said, how can I be involved in these projects if I can not even provide for my own family?" Dee recalls the confrontation with his father when he was just in high school in Manila.

Cao Pek stopped pressing his point to his six children, especially to Dee, the third in the brood. The old man, Dee notes, simply went on showing the meaning and the result of sharing his life's blessings.

The foundation's pamphlet on Cao Pek indicates that the hard life marked by perseverance and entrepreneurial spirit made the Chinese migrant a compassionate person.

Father's history

The foundation relates his life in this way: Cao Pek, born in Gunkang in Fukien province of mainland China in 1917, was brought by his parents to Moncada in Tarlac when he was just six years old.

Orphaned at an early age, he left for Manila. At daytime, he worked as a messenger and sold goods in the market. At night, he learned the skills of a radio technician.

During World War II, he joined an anti-Japanese guerrilla unit. He surrendered to regain the freedom of his elder brother, also a guerrilla. Awed by his courage, Japanese officials released him a few days later.

The post-war years saw Cao Pek using his savings to buy military surplus equipment, repairing, reassembling and selling these.

With a P300 capital and just 30 years old, Cao Pek established the Deeco Electronics Manufacturing in 1948. With Elena Dy, a Filipino-Chinese who put high value on living a frugal life, Cao Pek started assembling and making transformers, battery charges, welding transformers and public address systems.

Developing sports

The hardworking couple added the single side band transceivers and telephone switching systems to the company's product line.

They soon sold home appliances. Deeco's telecommunication division, created in 1973, now supplies the needs of more than 80 commercial radio stations and 12 telephone exchanges in the country.

Cao Pek, together with ever-supportive Elena, also became a patron of track and field athletes. Always spending his own resources, Dee says his father committed his entire life to the youth and the sports development program of the Filipino-Chinese community.

In 1983, Cao Pek volunteered as principal of the Cheng Kuang School in San Juan, working for free there. He increased the student population from 200 to 1,000 and transformed the dilapidated structure into a new three-story building. He also donated school buildings through the Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce.

Killed by kidnappers

The education and sports community lost Cao Pek to kidnappers who killed him on June 29, 1992.

But Cao Pek's spirit lives on, Dee says, as he made sure his own children lived a life of hard work and cultivated in them the values of patience, self-reliance and "public spirit."

"He required all of us his children to work in the store as soon as we reached 10 years old. And the lifestyle that he introduced was simple. Three meals a day were enough," Dee recalls of their growing up years.

Dee put up his own company Datelcom in Mabalacat and Angeles in 1985 when, as a salesman of Deeco, he realized his clients were unable to pay him.

The commerce graduate of the University of Sto. Tomas eventually tried his hand in the local telecommunication business.

After introducing the digital system and branching into cable television, Dee firmed up Datelcom in the ranking of Central Luzon's most stable employers.

The idea of putting up a cancer center came from his friend-doctors at St. Luke's Hospital who told him that 60 percent of their patients come from the North.

"At the (Philippine General Hospital), I also learned that they have a four-month backlog among patients, which means they can't cope with the volume of patients. On the other hand, some hospitals charge skyrocketing fees," he notes.

If business must have a kind heart and it is his means to help the needy, how does he handle his enterprises?

"I have a simple principle in life. You just walk straight and don't take any detours. And be honest in your dealings. Whatever you promise, you have to fulfill it," Dee explains.

Elena, now 72, ensures that the same business ethics and character values are passed on to her grandchildren.

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ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Louie C. Camino

MVP gives MTV Phils. new building

By Leah Salterio

STARTING August, MTV Philippines will have a new, posh address at The Fort in Taguig, where the popular, 24-hour music channel will have its own studios and corporate offices in a three-story building given by business mogul Manny V. Pangilinan.

The businessman's company, Metro Pacific, is a partner in the vast property known as the Global City in Taguig. Pangilinan was recently reelected member of the board of First Pacific, the parent company of Metro Pacific. He is also president and CEO of Philippine Long Distance and Telephone Co., a subsidiary of First Pacific.

First Pacific posted $40 million in profits in 2002, according to business reports.

Pangilinan has bankrolled the construction of the MTV Studios at the site of the former Storeys Restaurant at The Fort. The studio is set to open in August yet, but MTV Philippines' corporate offices will move to the new address starting June 26, according to Rod Nepomuceno, MTV marketing and communications director.

The new MTV Philippines studio will be similar to the MTV Asia headquarters in Singapore, according to Nepomuceno. The Filipino VJ Donita Rose became popular in the region while based in Singapore.

PANGILINAN

NEPOMUCENO

At present, MTV Philippines rents studio space at the Richmonde Towers at the Ortigas Center in Mandaluyong City, while its executive offices are at the Citibank Towers in Makati City.

Pangilinan also owns Music Source, the joint venture between MTV Asia and Nation Broadcasting Co. (NBC), run by radio man Francis Lumen. NBC runs and operates the FM station Joey@92.3 Rhythms and the AM station Angel Radyo. Lumen is the president and chief executive of the radio network.

In 2001, Music Source acquired the right to air MTV Asia on a 24-hour terrestrial UHF channel (Channel 41). Nepomuceno said NBC provided the infrastructure, while MTV Asia provided the content.

"MTV used to air only on cable TV and on Studio 23, where it was seen in certain blocks in the morning, afternoon and after midnight," Nepomuceno explained. "Unfortunately, Studio 23 couldn't give us a 24-hour broadcast."

"MTV Philippines had always dreamed of having a 24-hour terrestrial channel and it turned out that NBC had an inactive channel, which was given to us. But we had a cordial parting with Studio 23."

Among the VJs of MTV Philippines are KC Montero, Belinda Panelo, Sarah Meier and Shannen Torres.

MTV Philippines video jockeys (from left) Belinda Panelo, KC Montero and Sarah Meier

DID YOU KNOW...

Ex-newscaster, model turned lawyer and MTV Philippines officer **Rod Nepomuceno** makes sure his night-time appointments, if he has them at all, start and end early so he can be home for dinner cooked by his ex-flight attendant wife of just more than a year, **Teemy Ledesma.** Last week, he agreed to a 6 p.m. appointment at the Pacific Wharf in Rockwell's Power Plant Mall, arrived at 5:30 and was ready to go home to dinner and Teemy just before 7. Rod proposed marriage to Teemy at the end of his newscast–on nationwide TV.

LADIES' MAN. No other actor can do his latest role better than Christopher de Leon can, says movie partner Regine Velasquez.

32 years after 'Tinimbang,' Boyet remains object of women's fantasies

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

REGINE Velasquez says she wants to fall in love with "somebody like Boyet," referring to **Christopher de Leon.**

The songbird says she adores him so much that she immediately said yes when she was offered a second movie with Boyet after their first teamup in the 1996 hit, "Wanted: Perfect Mother."

Regine and Boyet are paired again in "Pangarap Ko ang Ibigin Ka," one of the six official entries in the Manila Film Festival, which starts June 11.

"I couldn't imagine another actor playing Boyet's role," says Regine, who plays a kooky artist (Alex) in the movie, the first movie of TV director **Louie Ignacio.** "Although I'm sure there are others around who might have done well in the part, *si* Boyet *ang bagay na bagay.*"

Boyet plays Raffy, a successful IT businessman whose world collapses when he loses his wife in an accident. While trying to rebuild his life, he meets Alex, an incurable romantic.

Every young actor who shows promise is often dubbed as the "new Christopher de Leon." Unfortunately, no one has been able to really fit the bill as far as looks, talent and acting prowess are concerned. To this day, Boyet remains in a league of his own. He has proven his mettle as a fine actor many times over since he started, at the age of 17, in **Lino Brocka**'s "Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang." He also had memorable dramatic performances in **Mario O'Hara**'s "Tatlong Taong Walang Diyos," **Eddie Romero**'s "Ganito Kami Noon, Paano Kayo Ngayon," **Ishmael Bernal**'s "Relasyon," **Eddie Garcia**'s

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Edu the father takes his kids for a ride

By Ansel Beluso
Contributor

CAN a father have a healthy relationship with his children even if he doesn't have a healthy relationship with their mother?

"Yes, it's possible," was Edu Manzano's quick reply. If the question flustered him, he did not show it. In fact, he discussed the subject of fatherhood with gusto.

"I have many, many shortcomings in my life but one thing I'm really proud of is that I'm a good father," he said.

We originally meant to write about Edu's plans for 2004. Did the former vice mayor of Makati City intend to run again for public office, or has he finally slain his political demons? But when our conversation strayed to fatherhood and he expressed a deep affection for his children when they were not even there, we knew the political spin would have to go to the dustbin.

WE ARE FAMILY. Daddy Edu with Enzo and Addie.

Need to talk

Doods has three kids. Most people know only of Luis, who now works for ABS-CBN as VJ on "Myx" and co-host of "Asap," but he is also equally proud of Addie, 10, and Enzo, 8. He showed us their picture in his wallet and he beamed as we noted how cute they were.

"I spend a lot of time with them," he volunteered. "My existence is affected if I don't see them. In the course of the day, I have this need to talk with them, to connect with them. There are times when I feel I need them more than they need me. But then, that's how children are. They don't appreciate the importance of parents unless there's a crisis. Or they realize how important you are only when you're not there and they start missing you.

"I believe there's no such thing as quality time if you can't give quantity time. I always try to make it a point to be with my children, not only because they grow so fast and I'll miss out on a lot of things if I don't keep up with them, but also because that's the only way to create opportunities to instill in them the right values."

This father is on a roll. "It's not just talking to them about the stuff of which life is made of but experiencing and living it with them. It is not just a matter of bonding with them but, more importantly, of preparing them for life."

Sense of discipline

Doods grew more excited about the subject, and his convictions as a father was fascinating. "Life as we know it is so harsh and hard. These days, it is no longer enough that we give our children the right education, which is very important to me, and all the insurance policies that our money can afford. We should also be able to give of ourselves."

He noted that his parenting style has changed with the years. "I am a disciplinarian. I want to instill in my children a sense of discipline that I know will do them good later in life. There was a time that I was like a drill sergeant to them. Like, there was a time for everything–a time to wake up, a time to eat, a time to study, a time to play, a time to pray, a time to sleep. For me, this wasn't just to inculcate in them the value of time but to firm them up and strengthen them for the rigors of life in general.

"But, these days, I'm not very strict anymore. I've realized that I can still do all that and still have fun."

Common sense

And fun Doods has tons of with his children. "Like, last summer, I made it a point to go with Enzo to his baseball clinic. I guess, I have 'Magandang Umaga, Bayan' to thank for that because it has forced me to wake up very early and affords me some free hours in the morning. And, given my cramped schedule, I create situations that give me time to be with my children.

"For instance, I enjoy MRT rides with them. That was even written about. There was this time, I was with my son. I just finished 'Showbiz Sabado' in ABS CBN in Quezon City and we needed to be in Makati but we were already running late. We rode the MRT. The man beside me observed, 'Edu, *nag-e-*MRT *ka, nagtitipid ka?'* I had the urge to lash at him but I just said, 'Common sense *lang po.'* Because that's what it was. The MRT is cool, clean, safe and fast. It just took 20 minutes for me to reach the Magallanes station from Quezon Boulevard."

We asked Doods what fears he has for his only daughter Addie, and he deadpanned, "I don't think I have any. I mean, I'll allow her to receive suitors only when she's 47 years old. And she can start entertaining the idea of marriage at the ripe age of 62."

Dreaded subject

Then, Doods turned wistful. "This is a crazy world we live in. I know I can't hold on to my daughter forever but I sure as hell am going to make the best of the time that she's still with me."

Doods paused. "One of the things I think I'll dread is when my daughter starts asking me about matters of the heart. I mean, how do you answer? A romantic experience is like a fingerprint, there are no two similar situations, and if I come up with a generalization or formula I got from my own reality, it could affect my daughter given her own reality which is different from mine."

But, knowing Doods, when the time comes, he'll know what to say and how to say it well, too. That's precisely where he's going to reap the fruits of his labors as a father. His children have a very good chance to turn out quite well.

Doods readily agrees. "They have a good mother. They take their school seriously. They are well taken care of. I'm confident that, when the time comes, they shall be able to give positive contributions to society and they can inspire other people with how well they've made of themselves given the harsh and hard realities that everyone has to live with nowadays."

> 'I know I can't hold on to my daughter forever but I sure as hell am going to make the best of the time that she's still with me'

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

REAL CANCUN **R18** 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:10, 9:30	**AGENT CODY BANKS** **PG13** 1:30,3:20,5:30, 7:40,9:50	**TANGING INA** **GP** 12:20,2:40,5:00, 7:20,9:40
DARKNESS FALLS **PG13** 11:40,1:40,3:40, 5:40,7:40,9:40	**FRIDA** **R18** 12:00, 2:25, 4:50, 7:20, 9:50	**BRUCE ALMIGHTY** **PG13** 11:20,1:30,3:40, 5:50,8:00,10:10

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

32 years after 'Tinimbang' . . .

From page C1

"Ipagpatawad Mo" and many others.

But it is Boyet as the dashing leading man that his fans love best. He is the big reason romantic movies like **Mike de Leon**'s "Kung Mangarap Ka't Magising," Bernal's "Ikaw ay Akin," **Danny Zialcita**'s "Tinimbang ang Langit," Eddie Garcia's "Sinasamba Kita," Brocka's "Maging Akin Ka Lamang," **Emmanuel Borlaza**'s "Bituing Walang Ningning" remain cult favorites.

"Pangarap Ko ang Ibigin Ka" brings back the old-fashioned ideals of love at first sight and finding the perfect man. Screenwriter **Mel Mendoza-del Rosario** conceived the plot. Mel also wrote the script of "Wanted: Perfect Mother" from a **Mars Ravelo** story.

Mel, another avowed Boyet fan, says she wrote "Pangarap Ko ang Ibigin Ka" with Boyet in mind as the widower who is every girl's ideal man.

Also in the cast of the new movie are **Dingdong Dantes, William Martinez, John Lapuz, Lara Fabregas, Rudy Francisco, Marissa Delgado, Noel Trinidad** and **Rosemarie Gil.**

Arnel's business

ARNEL **Ignacio** returns to his role as an entrepreneur. Last week, he opened Arnelli's Hair Wear at **Ricky Reyes'** Beauty Central on the second floor of Shoppesville in Greenhills.

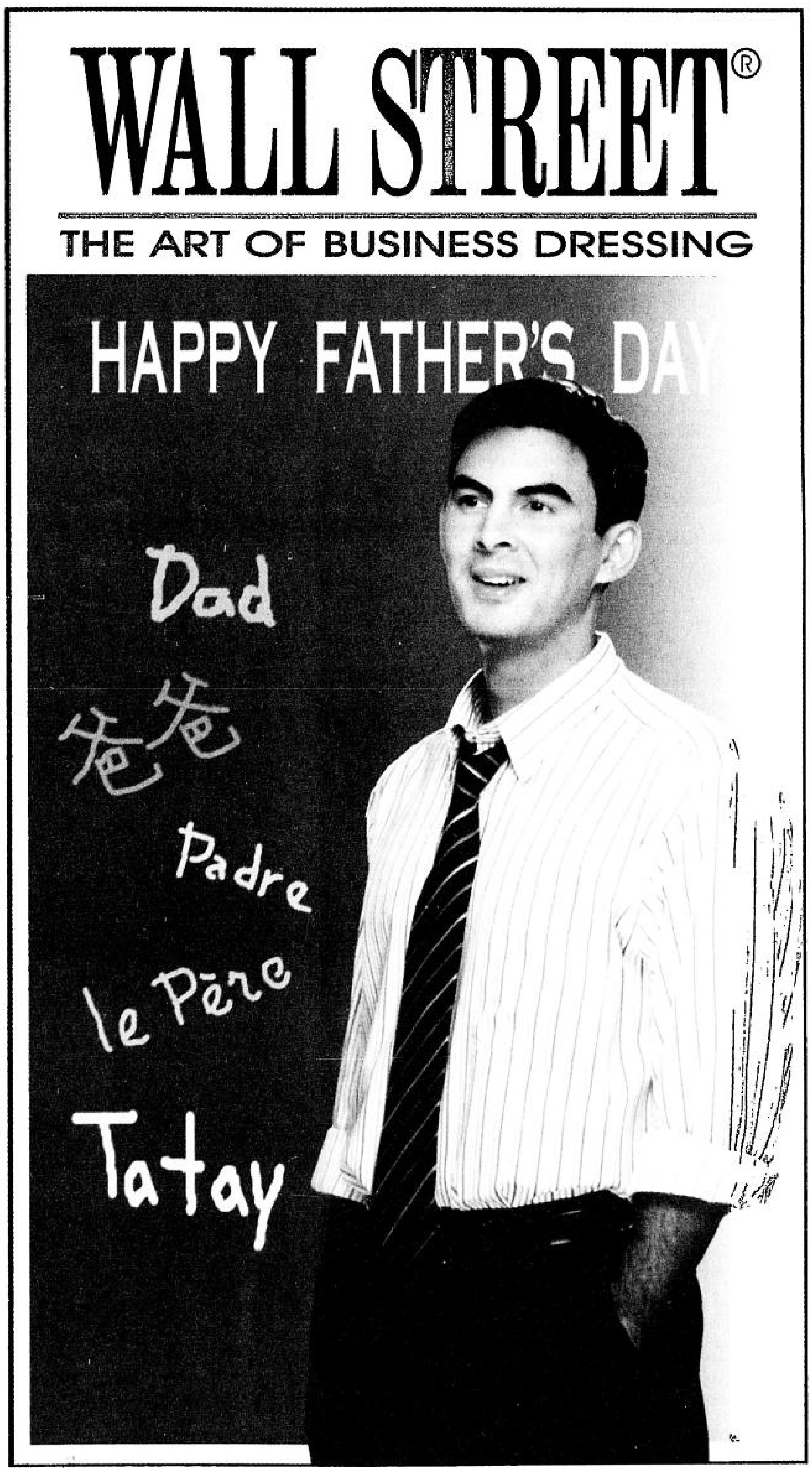
Wigs are nothing new to Arnel, who has been using hair pieces in his live shows and even on TV in his weekly game show, "K," on GMA 7.

Arnelli's Hair Wear is accessible through Mr. Donut and Greenlanes.

GMA 7 VP

CONGRATULATIONS to **Butch Raquel,** who was recently appointed to head the newly created Corporate Communications and PR deparment of GMA 7.

Butch, who earlier worked with rival network ABS-CBN for more than a decade, is holding the rank of vice president. He will be responsible for the internal as well as external PR of GMA 7 and its subsidiaries.



MAY CHARGER KA BA?

SHOW TIME

Viva Hot Babes at Island Cove

ISLAND Cove Resort and Viva Concerts present "Viva Hot Babes in the Flesh," June 14, Saturday, at Island Cove Resort in Bacoor, Cavite.

Feel the intensity of Maui Taylor, Katya Santos, Andrea del Rosario, Kristine Jaca, Jen Rosendahl, Myles Hernandez, Gwen Garci, Hazel Cabrera and the other hot babes as they tickle, seduce and capture your wild imagination in sizzling-hot production numbers wearing the sexy lingerie of top fashion designer Arielle Agasang.

Special guest Hajji Alejandro will belt-out top favorite tunes to further heat up the night's sensual and classy mood.

Director Floy Quintos is at the helm of the show, the best and most daring ever of the Viva Hot Babes.

Buy premium tickets and get a chance to win a dinner date with one of the bodacious Hot Babes.

Seat tickets are available at P1,500, P1,000 and P500 at the Viva Concerts Office, SM Ticket Net and Island Cove.

Call 810-3732, 810-5351, 810-3764 or (046) 434-0210, text 0920-6257037 or 0916-720-3339.

Sharon movie talent search

UNITEL Pictures is looking for a young boy to play one of the major roles in the movie, "Crying Ladies," starring Sharon Cuneta.

The boy must be between 5 to 7 years old. He could be a fresh, new face without experience or with acting credits and has appeared in movies, TV, stage and commercials. He must know how to sing and dance.

Talent agents and managers are invited to send in photographs with tapes or CDs, if possible, of their talents.

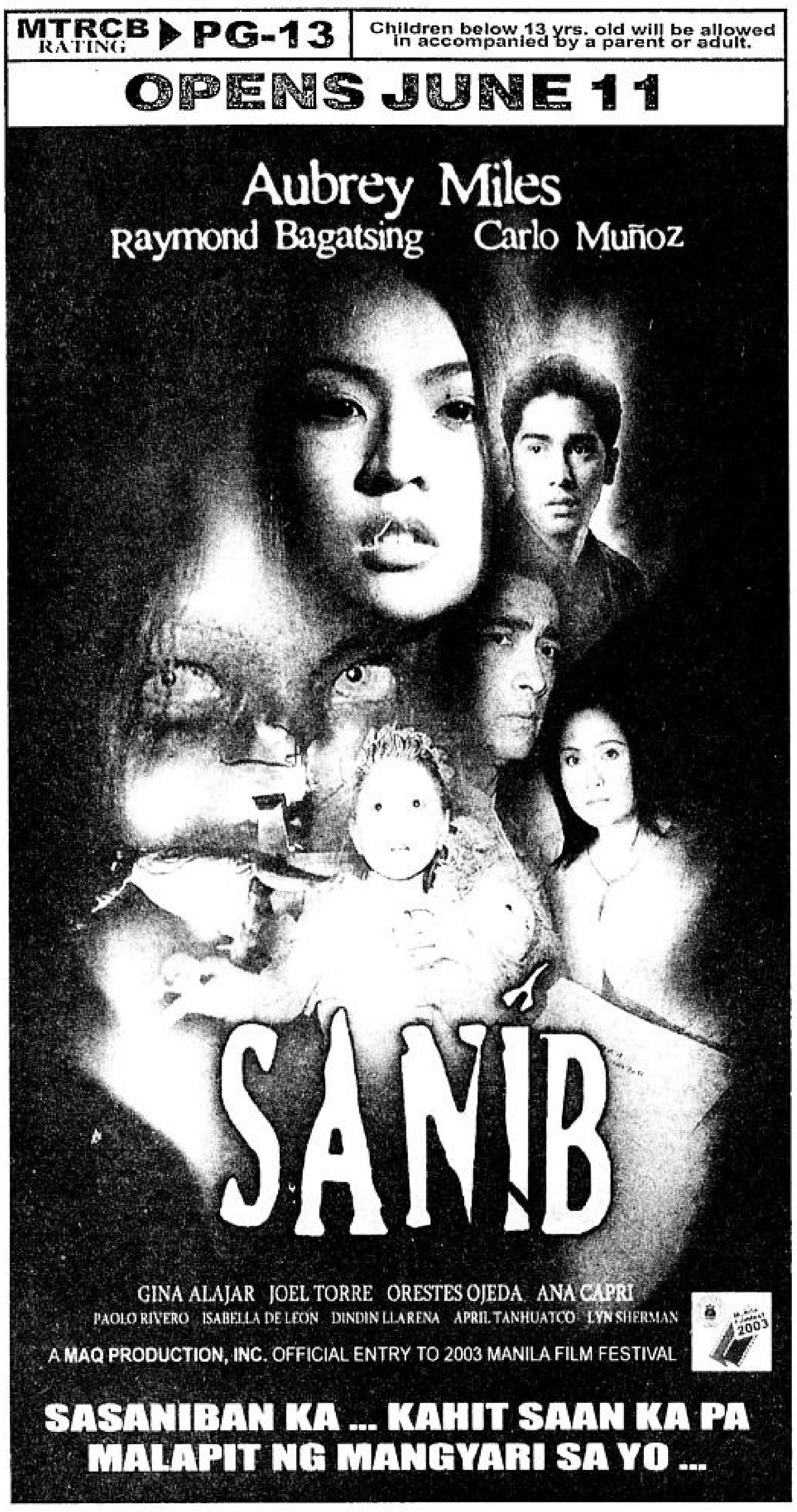
Individuals who feel they have what it takes to act, can also send in their photos or videos through their guardian or any family member.

Requirements are three different colored photos: One closeup, one medium shot and one full body shot.

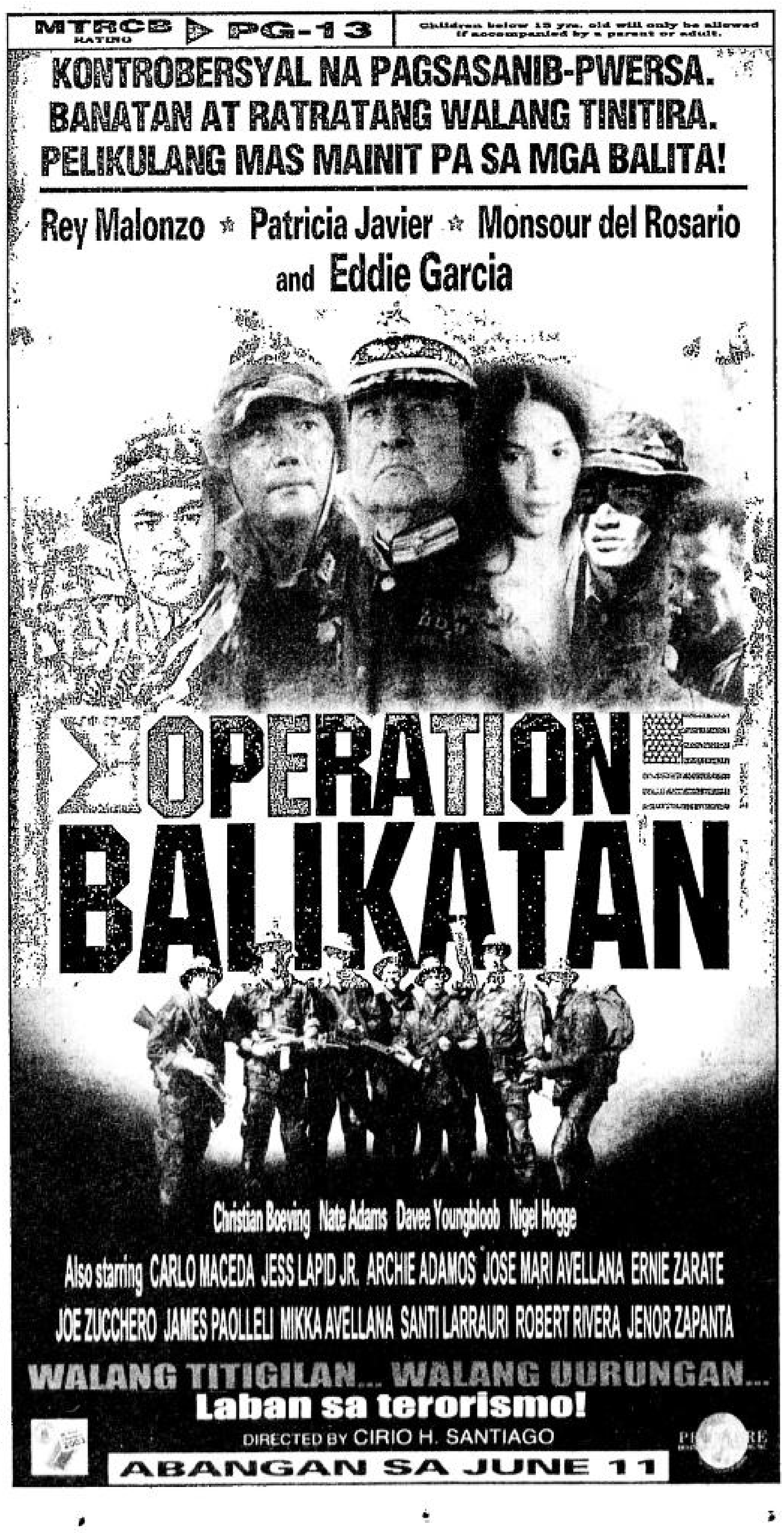
Photo entries must include a brief resume of the talent, highlighting his acting ability or experience.

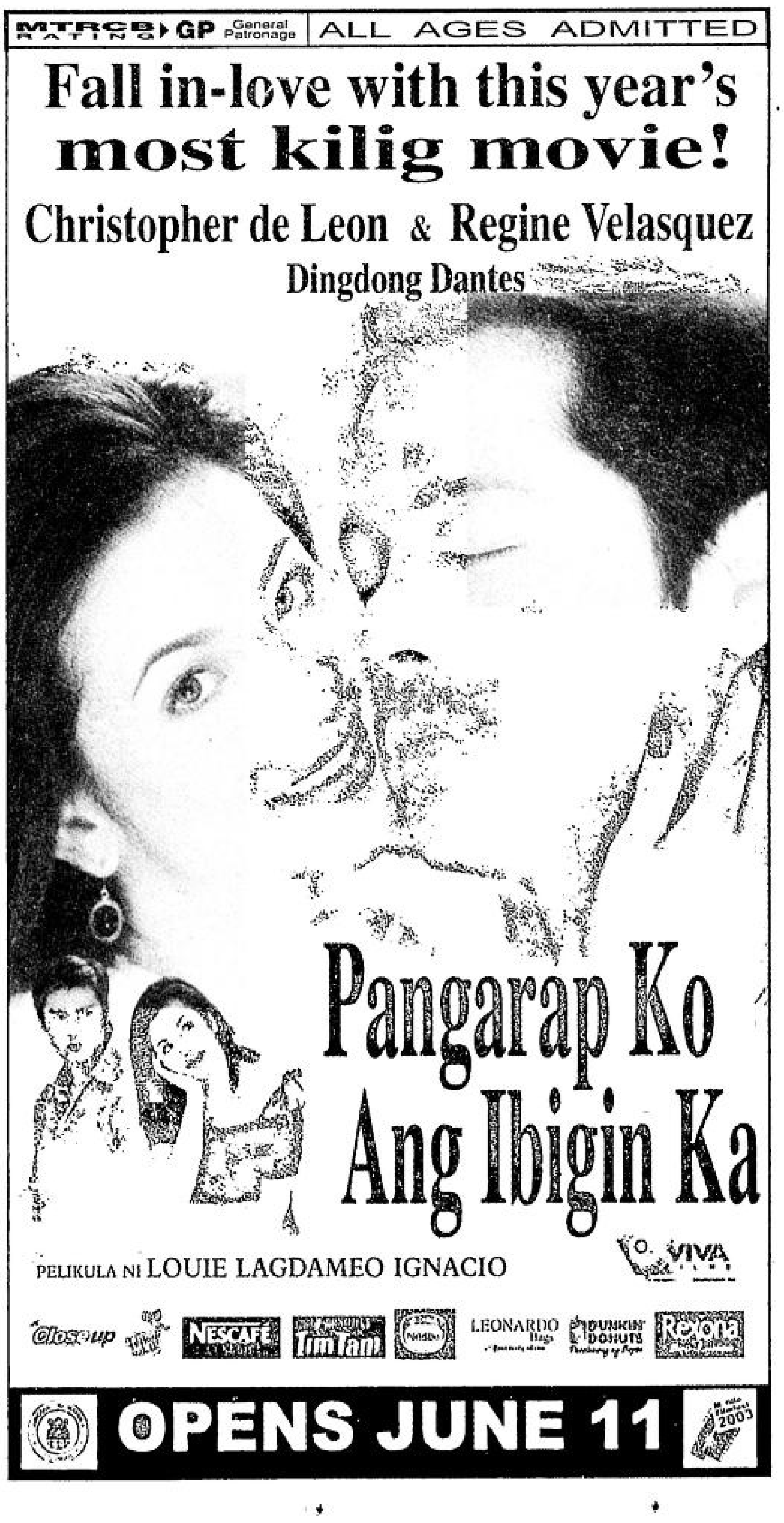
Send resumé and photos to Noemi Peji or Joan Loquinario-Cruz c/o United Pictures 1196 Vito Cruz Ext. corner Zapote St., Makati City.

Unitel Pictures is an independent movie company composed of advertising professionals.


MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
Children below 13 yrs. old will be allowed in accompanied by a parent or adult.
OPENS JUNE 11
Aubrey Miles
Raymond Bagatsing Carlo Muñoz
SANIB
GINA ALAJAR JOEL TORRE ORESTES OJEDA ANA CAPRI
PAOLO RIVERO ISABELLA DE LEON DINDIN LLARENA APRIL TANHUATCO LYN SHERMAN
A MAQ PRODUCTION, INC. OFFICIAL ENTRY TO 2003 MANILA FILM FESTIVAL
SASANIBAN KA ... KAHIT SAAN KA PA
MALAPIT NG MANGYARI SA YO ...

MTRCB RATING ▶ R RESTRICTED
Strictly for ADULTS
No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.
Ara o Maui kanino ka sasamba?
ang huling birhen sa lupa
ara mina jay manalo maui taylor
DIRECTED BY JOEL C. LAMANGAN DGPI
JAGGS
NEO
Official entry to the Manila Film Festival
SHOWING ON JUNE 11

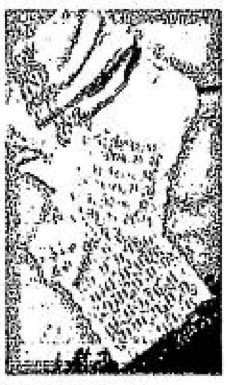

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
KONTROBERSYAL NA PAGSASANIB-PWERSA.
BANATAN AT RATRATANG WALANG TINITIRA.
PELIKULANG MAS MAINIT PA SA MGA BALITA!
Rey Malonzo ✫ Patricia Javier ✫ Monsour del Rosario
and Eddie Garcia
OPERATION BALIKATAN
Christian Boeving Nate Adams Davee Youngbloob Nigel Hogge
Also starring CARLO MACEDA JESS LAPID JR. ARCHIE ADAMOS JOSE MARI AVELLANA ERNIE ZARATE
JOE ZUCCHERO JAMES PAOLLELI MIKKA AVELLANA SANTI LARRAURI ROBERT RIVERA JENOR ZAPANTA
WALANG TITIGILAN... WALANG UURUNGAN...
Laban sa terorismo!
DIRECTED BY CIRIO H. SANTIAGO
ABANGAN SA JUNE 11


MTRCB RATING ▶ GP General Patronage
ALL AGES ADMITTED
Fall in-love with this year's
most kilig movie!
Christopher de Leon & Regine Velasquez
Dingdong Dantes
Pangarap Ko Ang Ibigin Ka
PELIKULA NI LOUIE LAGDAMEO IGNACIO
VIVA FILMS
Closeup NESCAFÉ Tim Tam LEONARDO Bags DUNKIN' DONUTS Rexona
OPENS JUNE 11

Rica

'one-time, big-time shopper'

BAG LADY totes her traveling companions.



SMILEY undies

Photos by
JIM GUIAO
PUNZALAN

By Marinel R. Cruz

YOUNG sexy star Rica Peralejo describes herself as a "one-time, big-time" shopper. She hardly has time to shop, but when she does, she buys everything she can get her hands on.

"This usually happens when I go to the States," Rica says, at home in Quezon City. "I usually splurge on stuff that people don't normally see here. I used to believe that if something fits me, it was meant to be mine."

Nowadays, she lets her mom Alice and oldest sister Joanne do the shopping for her.

"I save a lot of money when I let them buy my clothes," she says. "They raid my favorite shops when they go on sale."

Rica says she follows no system in arranging her roomful of clothes, bags and shoes. "*Basta* super *magulo*," she says. "I never seem to have the time to arrange them."

Rica plays the strong-willed Helena in the daily ABS-CBN soap "Kay Tagal Kitang Hinintay." She says she brings an average of 15 sets of clothes and shoes to the tapings which are every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

She still keeps the shirts and slacks that she doesn't like to wear anymore because "a role might require me to wear them again."

She considers jeans a good investment. She has a whole closet filled with them, in different cuts and colors, including some she has not even worn. Her favorite pair is the Abercrombie and Fitch low-waist jeans she bought in the United States. "I love it because of its cut and color," she says.

"Except for those that are jazzed up, jeans can be worn anytime and at any affair, be it casual or formal," she explains. "You just have to match them with the right accessories."

BACKGROUND BERNARD. Boyfriend 'Hunk' BJ Palanca lounges in the background while the well-shod Rica picks her favorites.

OUT OF THE CLOSET

Favorite cargo pants. "I bought this pair from Abercrombie and Fitch when I toured the US with the Hunks last April. People there are so into cargo pants nowadays."

Current favorite dress. "I bought this strapless dress in the States. I like it because of its cut. It's perfect for me. I can move freely without having to worry that my boobs would pop out."

Second favorite dress. "I like this because of its bead work. I don't see anyone else wearing this here."

Favorite T-shirt. "I love shirts with cute prints, like this shirt with the cartoon character Astro Boy print. A fan gave this to me during the Hunks show in San Diego. I match it with jeans and my Keds rubber shoes."

Favorite sleeveless shirt. "This white sleeveless shirt was given to me by my mom when she got back from a trip to Hong Kong. A white shirt is so simple. It highlights your face, your hair or your accessories."

Most memorable polo shirt. "I regret that I wore this Gap shirt only once. I bought this when I was still fat. Now that I've lost a lot of weight, *hindi na bagay.* I was having second thoughts when I bought this, but it was cheap."

Long-sleeved shirts. "I still keep them even when they are almost 10 years old. They never go out of style anyway. I still wear them if the character I play has to wear chic corporate attire."

Favorite jacket. "I bought this at Topshop. I found it very useful during a Holy Week tour. *Lamigin kasi ako*, even here in the Philippines. I didn't bring the right kind of jacket the first time I went to the States two years ago. I felt like I would die because of the cold. I've learned my lesson."

Most frequently used jacket. "I bought this black Morgan jacket in Dubai. I fell in love with it the first time I saw it but I didn't want to buy it because it was too expensive. When I found out that it was on sale at a 75-percent discount, I ran to the cash register before I could change my mind."

Favorite underwear. "I like to wear this pair of yellow smiley boxer shorts. It has a matching smiley pair of panties. My friends tell me I should be wearing lacy lingerie, but I still like undies with cute prints."

Current favorite bag. "I like this red utility bag from Secosana because it's big and sturdy. When I travel, I always bring a bag that can hold everything I need."

***Pa*-cute bag.** "I pick a bag depending on my mood. I bring this Hello Kitty bag when I simply want to dress down and not wear sexy clothes."

Summer bags. "I bring them when I have an out-of-town shooting or when my family goes to the beach. I pair them with khaki pants and slippers."

Favorite accessories. "I'm currently obsessed with crystals. I make earrings, necklaces and bracelets out of them. I'm lucky because I get materials from Charms and Crystals Shop for free because I'm its endorser."

Favorite dancing shoes. "I've had them since 1998, when I was on 'Keep on Dancing.' Look at how worn out they are. They're worth the price I paid for them."

Favorite rubber shoes. "They have to be the pair of white Keds I bought ages ago. They look good with jeans even today."

***Pa-porma* shoes.** "I got these from Camper. There's a fake bug pasted on one shoe. Whenever I wear them, people ask me if the bug is real. Cool!"

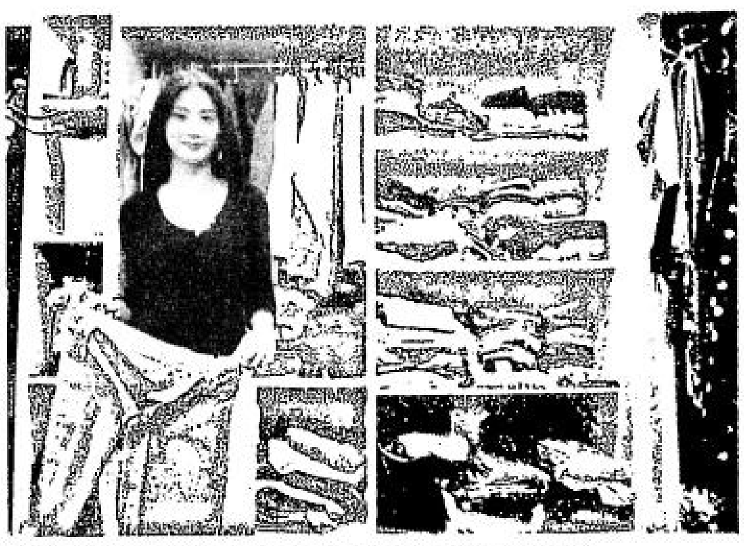
Kung fu shoes. "Trip *ko lang bilhin.* I matched the pair with a black and white Japanese obi."

Favorite high heels. "I love the white shoes from Bakers because they look good with almost anything. I usually match them with a white top and blue jeans."

Boots. "I bought this pair in the US, too. When I wore this for the first time here in the Philippines, I couldn't zip it up. I was already sweating but I still couldn't zip it up."

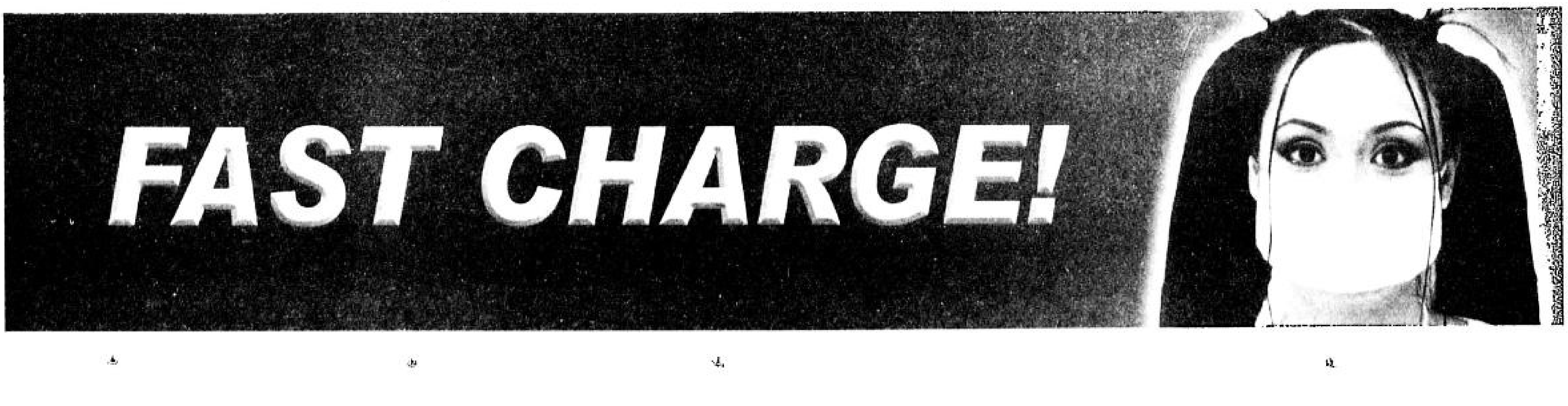
'I save a lot of money when I let my mom and sister buy my clothes. They raid my favorite shops'

SHOE DEPARTMENT in Rica's room looks like an entire shop.



DENIM DEVOTEE believes jeans are a good investment.

COLD COMFORT is given by jackets to the young star who easily feels chilly.



‘Sanib’ premieres at SM Manila

SHOW TIME

YES-FM 101.1, Ang Sagot ng Bayan, presents the special advanced screening of MAQ Productions’ “Sanib,” Tuesday, June 10, 7:30 p.m. at Cinema 2 of SM Manila.

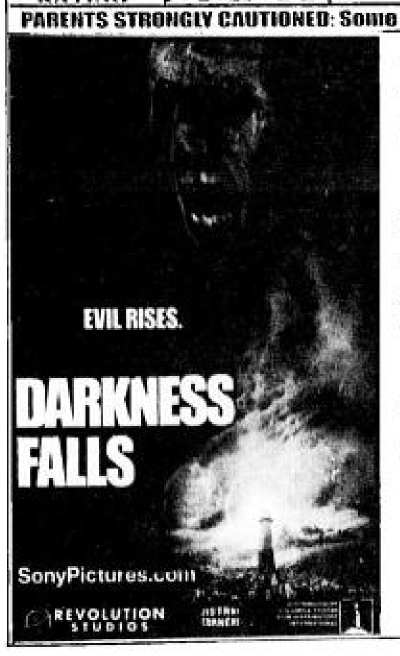
AUBREY Miles

Based on the story and screenplay of Celso Ad Castillo and Ron Bryant, “Sanib” topbills Aubrey Miles, who plays Melissa, a girl haunted by the vindictive ghost of her adopted sister.

Also in the suspense-thriller are Raymond Bagatsing, Carlo Muñoz, Joel Torre, Gina Alajar, Ana Capri and Jake Roxas.

Listeners may win movie premiere tickets by tuning in to Yes-FM and waiting for the DJ’s signal to call.

Yes-FM is a member of the Manila Broadcasting Company (MBC), which operates the largest radio network in the country, reaching virtually every Filipino city, province, town and municipality.



MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED: Some scenes may be inappropriate for children under age 13

‘Darkness Falls’

Scream all you can !

Legend says an old woman wrongly accused of a heinous crime was savagely slaughtered in the town of Darkness Falls 150 years ago. The vengeful spirit of ‘the Tooth Fairy’, hangs over the townspeople, ready to pounce on anyone who sees her in the dark.

A young man returns to this hometown to confront his haunted past, and perhaps save his childhood sweetheart and her younger brother from the unrelenting evil of the Tooth Fairy.

You’ll never go in the dark alone again! Kakaba-kaba ka ba? Bring a date or the whole barkada -- and hold on for your dear life!

WHO IS CLETIS TOUT?

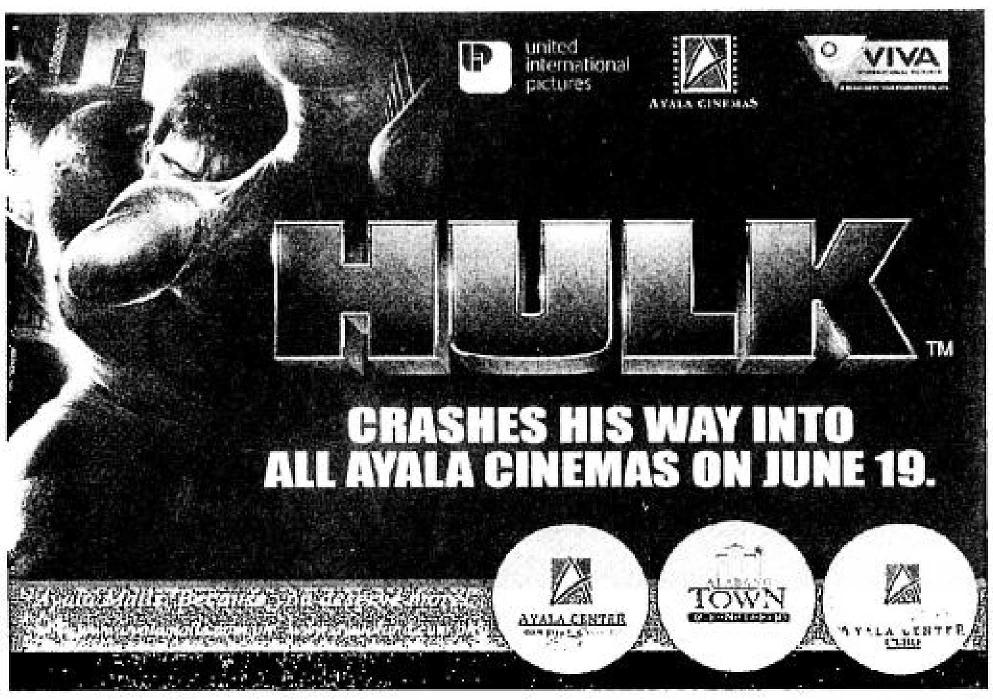
AYALA CINEMAS
NOW SHOWING EXCLUSIVELY AT
Greenbelt: ArtFilm & GLORIETTA 4
DARING, AWARD-WINNING, EXTRAORDINARY

Getting the alias was half the battle.
Surviving it is the other.
WHO IS
CLETIS TOUT?
CHRISTIAN SLATER, RICHARD DREYFUSS,
PORTIA DE ROSSI & TIM ALLEN

A prison escapee (Slater) assumes the identity of a deceased man named Cletis Tout, but soon discovers that someone had a contract out on Cletis' life, so now the escapee has to deal with not only the police, but a hitman (Allen) as well.

"A gem of a romantic crime comedy that turns out to be clever, amusing and unpredictable."
-- Kevin Thomas, LOS ANGELES TIMES

MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)
NOKIA SKYFILMS INQUIRER



PUNCH-DRUNK LOVE
ADAM SANDLER EMILY WATSON

AYALA CINEMAS
OPENS JUNE 18 AT ArtFilm
DARING, AWARD-WINNING, EXTRAORDINARY

PUNCH-DRUNK LOVE
ADAM SANDLER EMILY WATSON

A romantic comedy about an odd, spastic man (Sandler) with seven abusive sisters who soon has three thugs chasing him down, all because of a one-time call to a professional phone sex operator made in a moment of quiet desperation. This threatens his awkwardly blossoming relationship with one of his sister's co-workers (Watson) before it gets a chance to start.

Awards: Best Director - 2002 Cannes Film Festival; Best Director, Best Supporting Actress (Watson) - 2002 Toronto Film Critics Association

COFFEE CLUB DISCUSSION ON "PUNCH-DRUNK LOVE" on June 18 at 7pm.
For inquiries, contact 752-7866 or 752-7872.

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R-18)
NOKIA INQUIRER COLUMBIA PICTURES

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
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BRUCE ALMIGHTY
11:00 , 1:10 , 3:20 , 5:30 , 7:40 , 9:50
P13

CINEMA 2
DARKNESS FALL
1:15, 3:25,5:35, 7:45, 10:00
P13

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JUNE 19 2003 " CHANGE A LIFE " (LANI MISALUCHA) 8:30PM
JUNE 28 2003 N I N A " HEAVEN SENT " 8:00PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL 721-6726 OR 721-0635

Frankie MUNIZ
Hilary DUFF
AGENT CODY BANKS
Save The World. Get The Girl. Pass Math.

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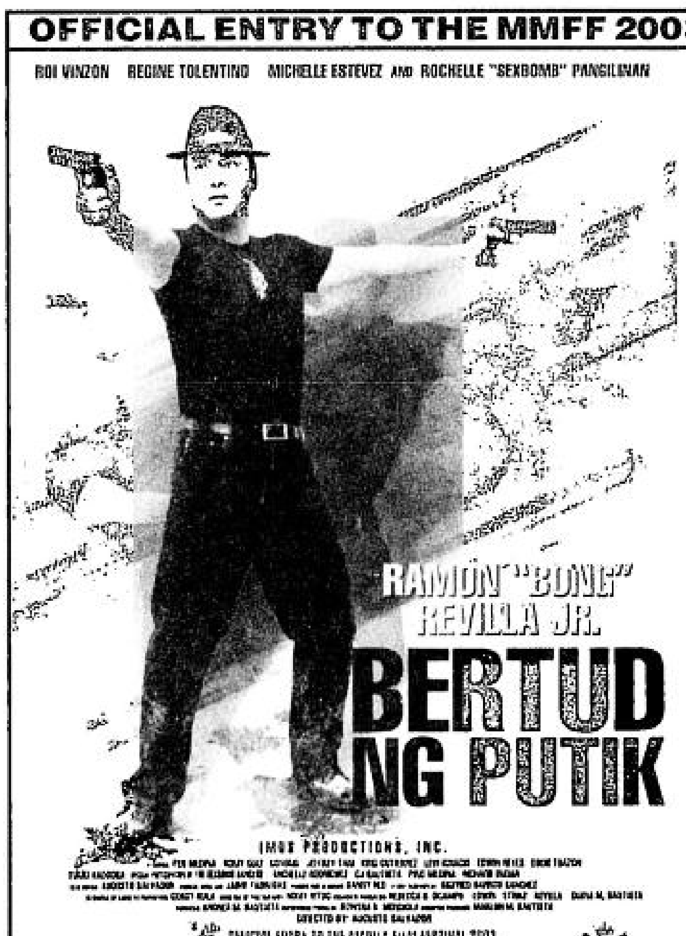
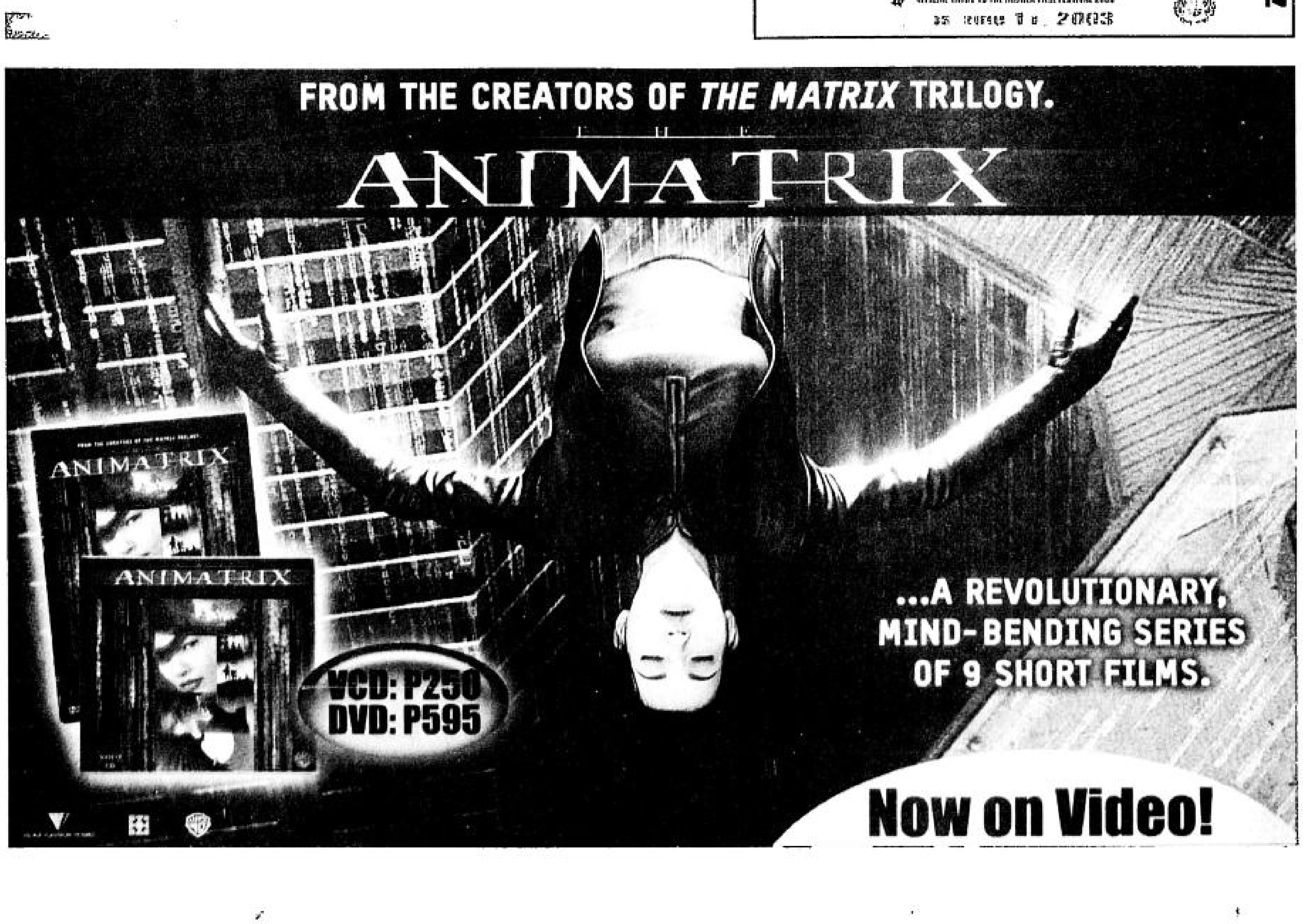
NOW SHOWING


RAMON "BONG" REVILLA JR.
BERTUD NG PUTIK
IMUS PRODUCTIONS, INC.
DIRECTED BY AUGUSTO SALVADOR

OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE MMFF 2003
ROI VINZON REGINE TOLENTINO MICHELLE ESTEVEZ AND ROCHELLE "SEXBOMB" PANGILINAN
OPENS JUNE 11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Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	PAKNERS
Ali 2	TANGING INA
Ali 3	BRUCE ALMIGHTY
Ali 4	DARKNESS FALLS
Ali 5	REAL CANCUN
Ali 6	BIGAY HILIG
Ali 7	MATRIX RELOADED

ARANETA COLISEUM

June 9 & 11	NCA 7-COCK DERBY
June 14	MARTIN/REGINE CONCERT
June 16,18,20	WORLD SLASHER CUP
June 22	PBA GAMES
June 28	NCAA OPENING CEREMONIES
July 12	UAAP OPENING CEREMONIES

ELEPHANT WORLD
FUN RIDES
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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	THE REAL CANCUN
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	HIRAM
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	BIGAY HILIG
B	ANG TANGING INA
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 10)
CINEMA-1	ANG TANGING INA
CINEMA-2	ANG KAPIT BAHAY
CINEMA-3	BIGAY HILIG
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BRUCE ALMIGHTY
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-6	AGENT CODY BANKS
CINEMA-7	FRIDA
CINEMA-8	ANG TANGING INA
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	BRUCE ALMIGHTY
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DARKNESS FALLS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	REAL CANCUN
CINEMA-12	VERDICT
CINEMA-14	PAKNERS
CINEMA-15	ANG TANGING INA

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

CINEMA 1	ANG TANGING INA
CINEMA 2	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
CINEMA 3	ANG KAPIT BAHAY
CINEMA 4	PAKNERS

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	[illegible]

Black film luminaries score big hits

VIEW-FINDER

Nestor U. Torre

DUE to our leftover colonial mentality, black performers don't rate well with Filipino viewers. Still, it can't be denied that African-American film artists have been scoring big hits and chalking up major accomplishments in Hollywood, so it's high time that we get over our biases to acknowledge their contribution to global cinema.

Seen in this light, black achievers in the world of film are led, not by an emerging superstar, but by the much-admired "guerilla" filmmaker, **Spike Lee**. He's passionate about making acutely realistic, provocative movies that open viewers' eyes, minds and hearts to life in all of its possibilities and contradictions.

Aside from coming up with his electrifying, undeniably compelling films, Lee has tapped into everything from music videos to television commercials. He has also produced other people's films like "Love and Basketball" under the umbrella of his production company, intriguingly named Forty Acres and a Mule.

Aside from establishing scholarship for minority students attending New York University's film school (his alma mater), he's also helped launch the movie careers of black talents like **Halle Berry** and **Samuel L. Jackson**.

Speaking of Halle Berry, she's really come into her own in the past couple of years, expertly combining big projects that enhance her star value, and small "indie' productions that stretch her thespic muscles.

The result: She's the only black lead actress ever to have an Oscar and she's been able to parlay her stints in James Bond and X-men films to a spin-off action film franchise all her own.

In terms of actual superstardom, however, the leading black luminary in Hollywood is **Denzel Washington**. Instructively, Denzel is also one of the US film capital's top box office attractions. Since it's tough for a black talent to make it in the biz, it must have taken a lot of work and determination for Denzel to get all the way to the top!

Washington got his training and start in the theater, then went the TV route before he acted in films. Luckily for him, he struck box office and Oscar gold early, winning the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his performance in the period drama "Glory."

Since very few black actors win an Oscar, Washington's precocious victory served notice that he was definitely a young talent to watch.

Through the years, he's built on one success after another, to the point where he's been able to initiate exceptional but uncommercial projects with his star value alone. Thus, his filmography lists an impressive combination of outstanding films.

It takes an enlightened man to bring complex roles to life, and Denzel is one of Hollywood's most admired thinkers and doers. With outstanding portrayals of Malcolm X, Coach Herman Boone in "Remember the Titans" and Robin Carter in "The Hurricane," Washington has established himself as a major force in Hollywood.

Delivering quality performance is his primary concern. And he's very prudent with his choice of characters to play. His roles have been so diverse and of such high quality that he's broken through the industry's racial barriers.

In the process, he's also proved that blacks have more to offer film audiences than violence and comic relief. Shouldn't we *Pinoy* viewers similarly wake up to that important fact and join the rest of the world in patronizing black artists' trailblazing and barrier-breaking films?

'$100 Taxi Ride' episodes

THE NATIONAL Geographic Channel's "$100 Taxi Ride" (9 p.m., Tuesdays) has these episodes lined up this month:

On June 10, travel to Taipei and Liverpool, England. In Taipei, visit the Chiang Kai Shek Memorial Hall and learn about the Generalissimo's role in fighting Communism.

In Liverpool, the birthplace of the Beatles, the first stop is the famous Grapes Pub, where the Fab Four used to hang out. Then go to the real Penny Lane and Strawberry Fields, and climb to the top of the Liver building for a great view of the city, plus a closer look at mythical "liver" birds that adorn the top.

June 17, Bucharest, Romania and Chennai, India. June 24, Glasgow, Scotland and Banjul, Gambia.

'Insects from Hell'

EVERY Thursday at 8 p.m. also on NGC, "Insects from Hell" transports viewers to the microscopic world of the creepy crawlies. See how insects ooze potent toxins, eat dung and even carry diseases. But also appreciate them for playing a positive role in the ecosystem and providing cures to debilitating illnesses.

Seventy percent of all animal species inhabiting the earth are insects, and many are vital to our existence.

Hard Rock Café

EVERY Sunday this month, 9MM performs at Hard Rock Café. Other entertainers: Mondays, Big Band. Tuesday, Pido with Take One. Wednesday, **Jimmy Bondoc** and **Nyoy Volante** with Mannos. Thursday, the Company.

Nina autographs

NINA signs autographs and performs cuts from her debut album, "Heaven," on June 15 at 5 p.m. at SM Megamall. And on June 28, she will star in her first big concert at the Music Museum.

DID YOU KNOW...

There is money in going sexy. Two weeks ago, sexy star **Diana Zubiri** got a new Honda CRV, bought with her show biz earnings.

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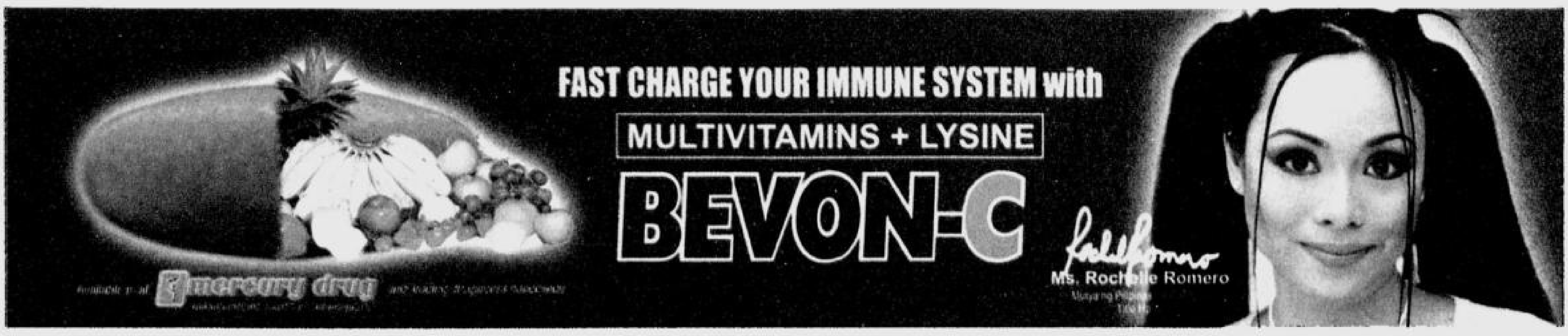

ENTERTAINMEN

'PAKWAN' BEAUTY. Ruffa, who says she looks like she swallowed a watermelon, and mom Annabelle Rama entertain guests like Janelle Bautista.

2 'super-fun' baby shower parties for Ruffa

4-stage bath system

SHOWTIME. It's a bath set, Ruffa announces.

By Leah Salterio

RUFFA Gutierrez, now seven months pregnant, had two "super-fun" baby showers two weekends ago in California.

The first one was held on Saturday, May 31; in the house of her friend Vivian Fermin in Lakewood, California. The following day, Ruffa had another baby shower hosted by Monet Lu at the sprawling outdoor garden of the New Otani Hotel in Los Angeles.

"My tummy has grown like a mini pumpkin," said Ruffa in a text message.

She will have a girl, according to an ultrasound test, in the first week of August.

The actress-beauty queen had married her Turkish boyfriend Yilmaz Bektas in Manila last March 25, and then she flew to Los Angeles a few days later.

Yilmaz initially wanted Ruffa to give birth in Istanbul, but the actress said she preferred to be in the United States when the baby comes.

Next week, Yilmaz will fly to L.A. to help Ruffa move to a new residence near the beach.

"I want a place that is far from the city," Ruffa said. "So we're moving to a high-rise either in Beverly Hills or Marina del Rey, where I can see the sunset and the ocean. It's more serene there."

The baby shower guests enjoyed the cool spring air and the buffet in the outdoor party at the New Otani Hotel. When Ruffa started to open the gifts, the guests were taken back to a scene during her wedding at The Tent in The Fort in Taguig, Metro Manila, where Yilmaz had raised a pair of baby's shoes to announce that Ruffa was pregnant.

At the shower party, Ruffa opened a big bag and raised its contents, a pair of Gucci baby shoes.

The INQUIRER's Tim Yap, who was in the L.A. party, said Ruffa was late for her own baby shower. "Very her," said Tim on the phone. "She was late and she got away with it because she is so sweet, stunning and overwhelming. Everybody was so happy to see her. The moment she saw me, she gasped, 'Look at me, it's like I swallowed a whole *pakwan*!'"

Disney VJ Karen Borja, who is now based in L.A., hosted the second party. Among the other guests were former Binibining Pilipinas winner Janelle Bautista and VJ Joey Mead.

Ruffa's mom, Annabelle Rama, helped entertain the guests. Dad Eddie and brother Rocky were in the first shower party the night before.

"Ruffa was like hosting a bingo game, because she was announcing every gift she received," Tim said. "She's a real entertainer. She's so used to the limelight. It's like second skin to her."

Ruffa said that after she gives birth, she and her baby will return to Manila in time for the yearend holidays. The baby's baptism will also be held here.

GUCCI FOOTSIE. Like husband Yilmaz raising a pair of baby shoes to announce her pregnancy during their wedding in Manila, Ruffa raises a pair of kiddie Guccis.

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A violin prodigy, a prize-winning baritone and a neglected soprano

Chino Gutierrez is off to German music school, Andrew Fernando wins first prize in the Zachary competition, and Mercedes Matias Santiago is 90 and almost forgotten

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

HE was one of the prize-winners of the National Music Competition for Young Artists at age 9, got the top prize at age 12, has seen "The Sound of Music" more than 20 times, and loves "Gladiator" and "A Beautiful Mind."

When violin icon Oscar Yatco heard Chino Gutierrez for the first time, he was very impressed. He advised the boy to study with noted German professor Jens Ellermann, who also taught the celebrated Japanese violin prodigy, Midori.

Gutierrez will soon leave for Germany to heed the advice. He will perform his farewell recital in Francisco Santiago Hall on June 13.

Recently he got a standing ovation from an overflow crowd in the Pasig Museum during the Pasig Summer Music Festival.

Turned instant Gutierrez fans were actor Cesar Montano, filmmakers Marilou Diaz-Abaya and Laurice Guillen, actor Johnny Delgado, former Senator Leticia Shahani. Equally impressed were Behn Cervantes, Bien Lumbera, Randy David.

The prodigy had only good words for the German professor whom he will meet again this month. Last year, he had short lessons from Professor Ellermann, and he made quite an impression.

Said Gutierrez about his teacher: "He was very demanding and he knew how to motivate me to give my best. He'd always tell me where I was going wrong and how I could fix it. On the other hand, he was unstinting with his praise. If I did a good job, he would compliment my efforts.

A VIOLIN/ D4

VIOLINIST Chino Gutierrez

BARITONE
Andrew Fernando

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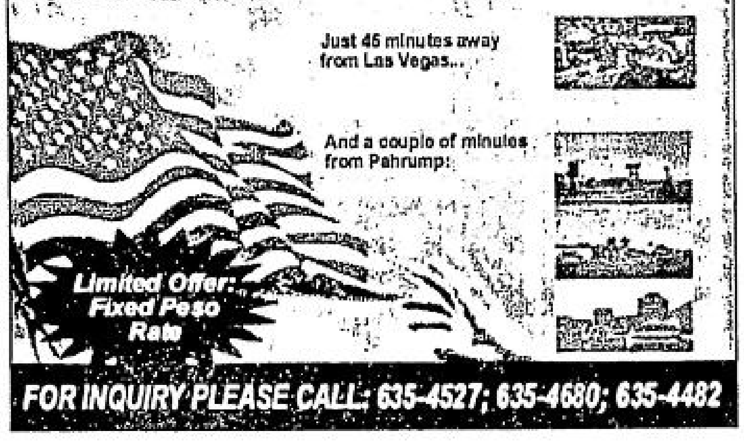
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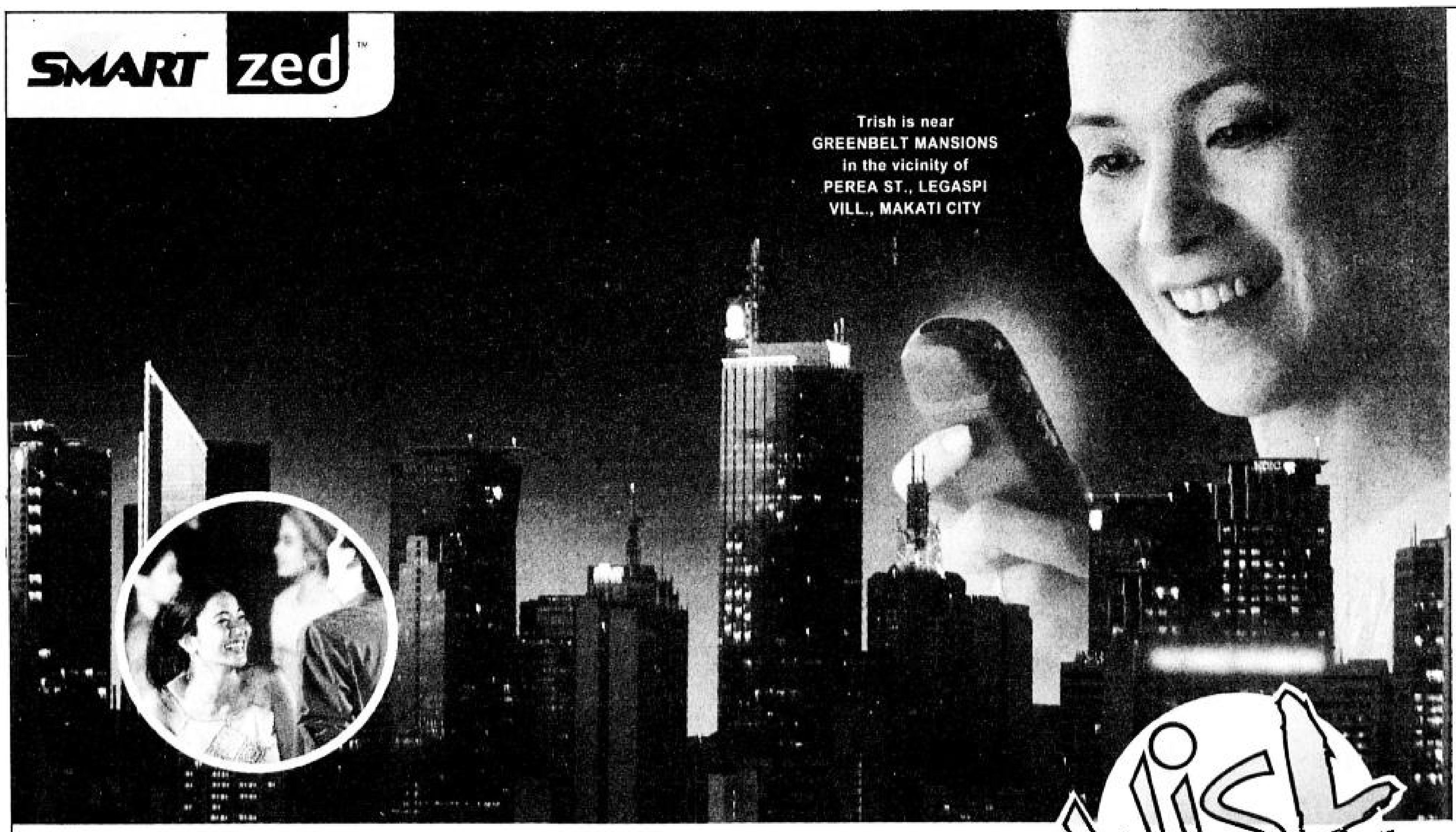
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READING should be an enjoyable experience for everyone.

DR. FELY Pado reading to supervisors, teachers and Grade 1 students in the recently held Bright Minds Read workshop.

70 TEACHERS and principals attend the training in Marikina.

McDo

Efforts to revive l

READING is a dynamic process. The reac
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Yet, for all the wonders reading bri
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Various groups put a tremendous am
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According to Dr. Corazon Santiago, D
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Through "Bright Minds Read," McD
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McDonald's

MCDONALD'S signed a memorandum of agreement with Goodwill Bookstore for the 'Bright Minds Read Good Books' campaign. Present during the signing are (from left) McDonald's PR and Communications manager Zonito Torrevillas, managing director of McDonald's Joseph S. Lau, president of Goodwill Bookstore Maritess Cancio- Suplico, publishing manager Liza Gutierrez, and special projects group head Christine Sipin of Goodwill Bookstore .

Books donated to DepEd NCR s

TO COMPLETE its role as donor of DepEd's Adopt-a-School Program, McDonald's donated teaching guides, activity sheets, and workbooks for kids.

Adarna Books has already printed 39 titles for the pilot batch of teachers and pupils who are the main beneficiaries of McDonald's Bright Minds Read campaign. A total of 120 books are donated by McDonald's to 14 public schools in NCR.

The instructional materials used by the teachers during the training last month were also provided by McDonald's and were produced by Adarna. The manuals and the workbooks are for English and Filipino subjects. To ensure that the books and teaching guides are in accordance with DepEd's curriculum, Adarna worked together with the Elementary Education Division of DepEd NCR.

The 39 titles of the storybooks were already existing titles of Adarna.

According to a teacher par
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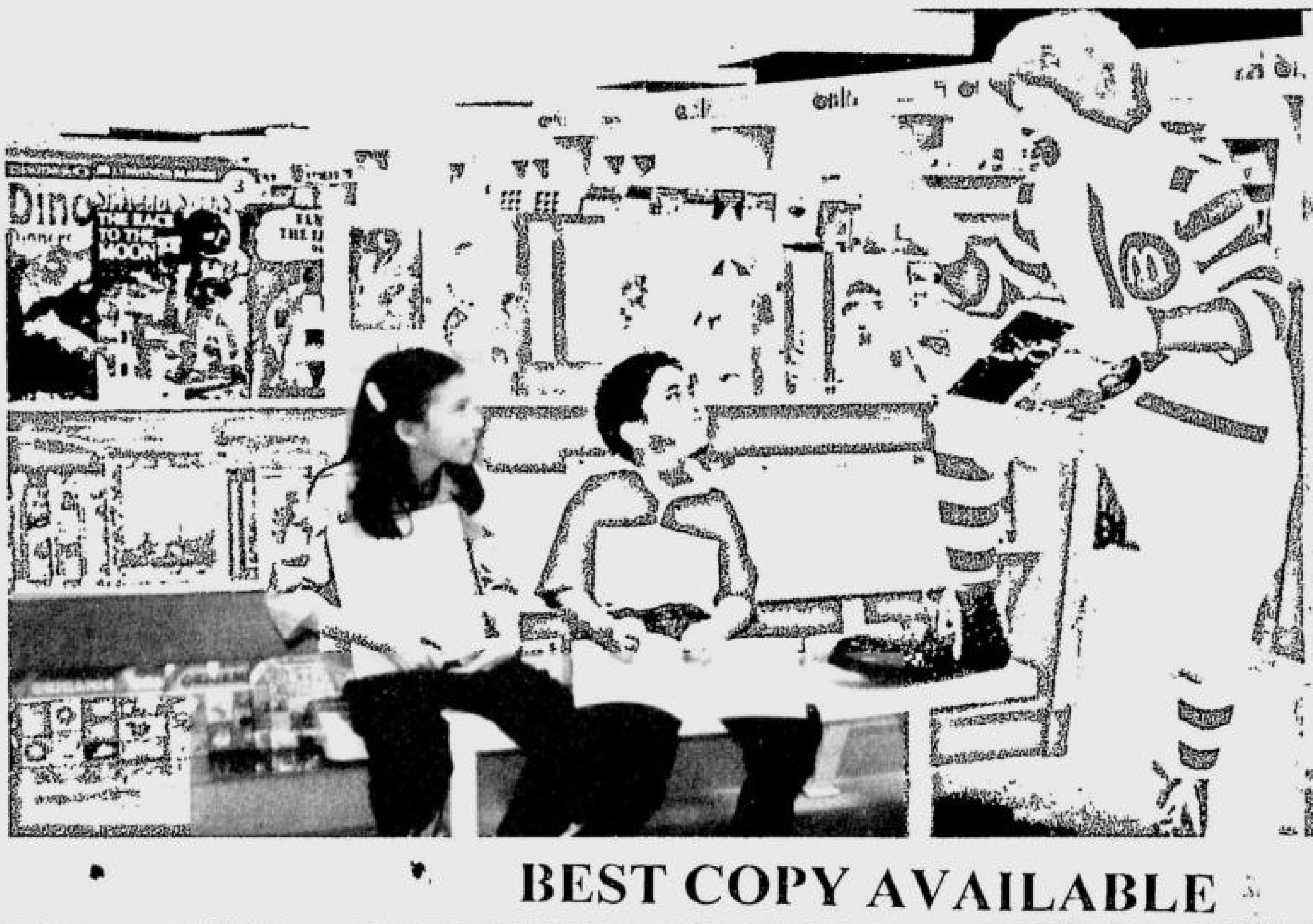

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nald's Bright Minds Read

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Text by Marlet Salazar
Photos by Egay Montana

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n the University
ored a training

camp for Grade 1 teachers and principals in the National Capital Region last month at the Regional Educational Learning Center in Marikina.

McDonald's launched the "Bright Minds Read" program in September 2002. Aside from the training camp, the company will also provide teaching guides and workbooks for the pupils.

The main goal of this undertaking is to upgrade the competence of Grade 1 teachers, especially in the field of teaching beginning reading, said Dr. Nemah Hermosa, a professor at the UP College of Education. "We also hope to decrease the number of non-readers, if not totally eradicate it, in Grade 1."

The "new" strategy to entice children to read involves starting classes with a storybook reading every day. To achieve this, Adarna Books, the leading children's books publisher in the country, is commissioned to print big books with colorful illustrations. Big and colorful storybooks help children to understand the story better. These books will also arouse their interest in the story that will eventually develop their love for reading.

"People learn a lot from reading. It expands experience beyond their own person," said Dr. Felicitas Pado, also a professor at the UP College of Education.

The training will benefit not only the more than 4,200 Grade 1 students this school year, but also the 70 teachers and principals which represented the 14 schools in the NCR. It serves as a refresher course for them, too.

Langgam!
Tipaklong

ROSARIO Rufin, principal of P. Bernardo Elementary School in Quezon City, enjoys a good book.

: Corazon Santiago, DepEd NCR Director,
; first to respond to the call of the Depart-
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MCDONALD'S customer interviewed by a DZMM reporter for the Reading Patrol

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McDonald's Bright Minds Read commissioned Adarna to print 39 titles for the pilot batch of teachers and pupils who are the main beneficiaries of this campaign. A total of 120 books are donated by McDonald's to 14 public schools in NCR

GEORGE T. Yang, president of McDonald's, receives books from children of employees for the Bright Minds Read Book Donation Drive in McDonald's office and restaurants. McDonald's, with DepEd-NCR and in cooperation of Lions Clubs International Multiple District 301, turned over thousands of general reference books for use of public schools

Bright Minds Read seeks to empower the Filipino child, through encouragement and promotion of reading as a fun, enjoyable activity for growth in mind, character and values.

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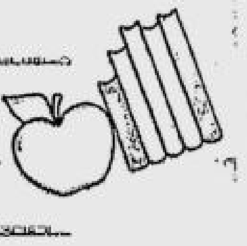

Reading Patrol spots lucky readers

READING, indeed, reaps many rewards. Many readers during the past month won prizes when they became the lucky reader of the day.

McDonald's and Goodwill Bookstore made several readers winners with its "Bright Minds Read Good Books Reading Patrol." Individuals spotted by a radio reporter reading their favorite books were interviewed on the spot. It was aired over radio stations DZMM and DWRR. Readers are just about everywhere: from terminals to coffee shops to malls. These people just couldn't put a good book down.

The winners brought home a McDonald's Be Our Guest coupon set and a special book package from Goodwill Bookstore.

The "Bright Minds Read Good Books Reading Patrol" is just one of the many programs advocated by McDonald's together with Goodwill Bookstore, ABS-CBN, and the Department of Education - NCR to help promote reading to people.

McDonald's and Goodwill Bookstore made several readers winners with its 'Bright Minds Read Good Books' Reading Patrol

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A violin prodigy, a prize-winning baritone and a neglected soprano

MAESTRA Mercedes Matias Santiago (seated, left) with Pasig City Vice Mayor Lorna Bernardo (standing, center) and the family of the late tenor Octavio Cruz at the Pasig Museum last year.

From page D1

When he realized that I was a serious and eager student, he responded by giving me extra tune lessons during weekdays and even Sundays. On top of that, he taught me new ways of looking at music."

But his first violin teacher was Coke Bolipata, from whom he learned scales, etudes, exercises and rhythm.

Said Chino: "From Sir Coke, I discovered the fun side of violin-playing. I remember we were laughing and playing games all the time."

The parents, Lamberto and Bambi Gutierrez, realized their son was unique when he was still a baby. When the baby was upset or sick, they would put on classical music and that was enough to put him in a good mood.

When he was about four years old, he was in his parents' car listening to Beethoven's Fifth, and suddenly Chino started humming along, but he wasn't following the main melody. He was doing the part for the orchestra.

Concluded Chino's parents: "We thought that what he did required some sensitivity. Certainly one would need a good ear to distinguish the different melodies in the popular Beethoven symphony."

The boy's meticulousness was evident when he rehearsed without the pianist a Beethoven sonata in the Pasig Museum a day before the concert. He stopped in the parts for the piano and resumed again for the violin part.

The Gutierrez couple is not in a hurry. "Our role is to look for opportunities and to help keep his options open until he is old enough to decide on a lifetime career. We realize it is a bit too early to expect him to make a final decision about what he is going to do the rest of his life. And yet we don't want to wait till he is too old to get proper training with the violin."

The parents realize only too well that these are crucial years in the development of a violinist.

"If he decides a few years from now that he wants to give his life to the violin, then at least there would be no regrets about providing the necessary training when it was needed."

Chino is enjoying his youth. Asked about his ambition, he spoke like any excited youth: "Right now, I want to be many things—a famous concert violinist, a theoretical physicist, mathematician, forensic exam Egyptologist, historian and linguist. What I actually turn out to be depends on the circumstances and opportunities that are made available to me. It also depends greatly on my discernment of God's will in my life. If He thinks I can serve Him, my country and my fellowmen best by being a concert violinist, then that's what I will do."

Chino's June 13 program includes Bach's Partita No. 3 in E Major; Mozart's Sonata in C Major KV 296; Wieniawski's Caprice in A Minor; Paganini's Caprice No. 13; Saint Saens' Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso; Kreisler's Tambourin Chinois; Sarasate's Gypsy Airs and Velez's "Sa Kabukiran."

Here and there

Baritone Andrew Fernando, who last appeared in a superb recital at the CCP, won first prize in the Zachary Voice Competition. This is the same competition won by soprano Aprile Taillo, the next diva of the Met .

Earlier, I brought Fernando to Legazpi City, Cebu, Bacolod and Silay, and music lovers in the provinces realized that a baritone could stand equal to the tenor and the soprano. Their misconceived notion of the subordinate role of the baritone was understandable because, even in the opera, baritones are often cast as villains.

After Fernando, the new baritone to watch is again from the UST Conservatory of Music, and he is none other than Noel Ascona who elicited a round of bravos the first time he was heard at the Pasig music fest last April.

The first time I was thrilled by a baritone was when I heard Swedish baritone Hakan Hagegard at the CCP in 1980. He was the same singer cast in the film version of Mozart's "The Magic Flute" by Ingmar Bergman.

***

Pianist Albert Tiu returns to the CCP with the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra (SMPO) on June 14 as soloist in the Grieg concerto conducted by Julian Quirit. It is billed as SMPO's first commercial concert as tickets are now on sale.

Those who bought tickets for the first time to an SMPO concert, however, will say that the Licad-SMPO-Rodel Colmenar tandem in June last year was the orchestra's first rousing commercial and artistic success. That brownout in the middle of Rachmaninoff's Third Concerto also made it the concert of the century.

By the way, Licad will return to the Philamlife Theater on Aug. 16 and 30 and will play Saint-Saens' Piano Concerto No. 2 with the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Rodel Colmenar. For tickets, call 7051728 or 7225148.

***

Classical singers in a bistro bar? Tenors Nolyn Cabahug and Ramon Acoymo plus soprano Alexis Edralin with pianist Jude Areopagita will figure in Merk's Bar Bistro's first classical night on Monday, June 23, 9 p.m. For tickets, call 757-4721.

***

Tenor Octavio Cruz, who played the lead tenor roles in "La Traviata," "Lucia di Lammermoor" and "Pagliacci," at the Metropolitan Theater, Manila Grand Opera House and the FEU Auditorium in the '30s and the '40s, will be given a special concert tribute on July 27.

Those who have interesting anecdotes, photos and press clippings of the late tenor are requested to share them with Music News. Text or call 0918-7376901 for inquiries.

***

The son of Octavio Cruz, Rodolfo, visited Maestra Mercedes Matias Santiago, who was the tenor's leading lady in at least three operas.

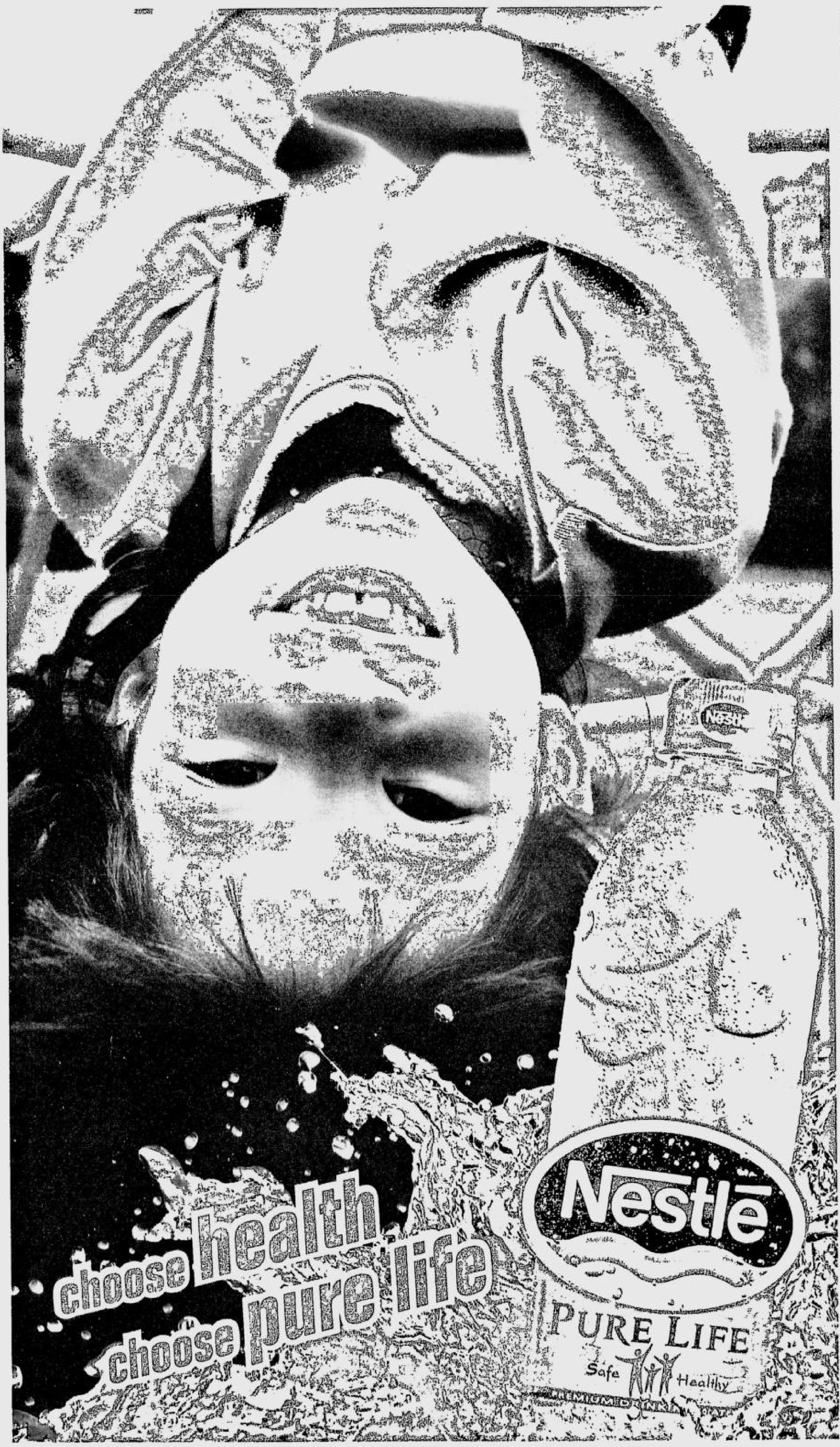
The Maestra is now in her 90s, bedridden and with no recognition or token citation from any existing cultural institutions. The National Artist Awards almost always consider candidates who are either dead or dying.

In the '30, '40s and early '50s, the appearance of this soprano gathered Philippine officialdom. She is the first Filipina to sing Gilda ("Rigoletto") in Italy and the first to sing the role of Donizetti's Lucia di Lammermoor.

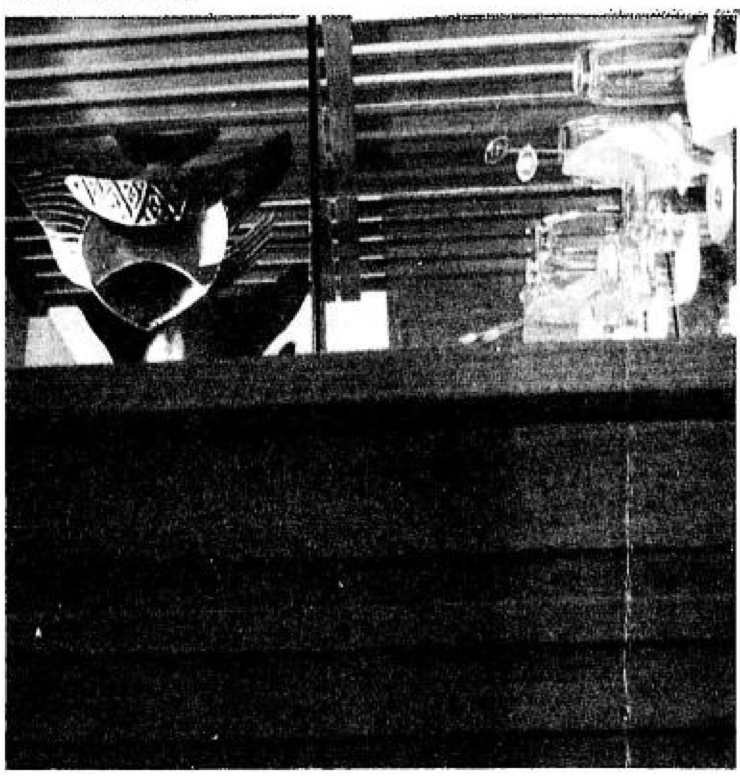
She taught music for more than 60 years. The great singers who underwent her tutelage were mezzo soprano Conchita Gaston, Nina Zandueta, Luz Morales and many others. Another famous pupil is former First Lady Imelda Marcos.

The Maestra is unable to take solid food, surviving on the generosity of her former pupils and friends. This is how artists live in this country. She will probably be remembered only when she passes on to the Great Beyond.

BARITONE Noel Ascona



LIFESTYLE



COUNTERPOINT of natural wood. Closet doors of vertical wooden slats are a solid foil to the transparency of the mirror-backed open slats of the minibar.

Cebu's Shangri-La Mactan Island Resort weaves together tropical craftsmanship and environmental consciousness

A real Shangri-La in the South

SPACED OUT

Augusto F. Villalon

SHANGRI-LA'S Mactan Island Resort has changed their rooms. The new look has been much talked about a lot.

What guests don't usually see or hear about is the strong environmental program that sustains both hotel operations and its manicured 13-hectare garden. That is something worth talking about.

There is a lot to like in the new Shangri-La rooms. The renovation does not fall into the genre of the old resort clichés of shells turned into lamps and chandeliers, heavy bamboo furniture lashed together with rattan strips, wicker furniture, and a lot of highly polished wood.

The Shangri-La rooms are now showcases of the best in Filipino furniture and furnishings constructed with the best Cebuano craftsmanship. Everything in the rooms recognizes the Filipino eye, the unique design approach of the Cebuano and his impeccable use of local materials.

> The renovation does not fall into the genre of old resort clichés

The Shangri-La consultants who do the design work for the entire range of Shangri-La properties worldwide took a fresh look at Cebu manufacturers and drew from them their inspiration, building the new rooms around Philippine materials and superb local craftsmanship.

Everything in the room is natural—from the materials to the finishes, down to the luxurious hand-made feel of all the furniture and furnishings.

Most of the woodwork in the room is in slats of wood or bamboo, evoking but avoiding the usual clichéd reinterpretation of the traditional *bahay kubo*. There are no rough bamboo slats that are preserved in shiny shellac here. Instead, there is impeccable joinery in all of the wooden pieces.

Filipino feel

The feel of the room is instantly tropical, completely Filipino, totally contemporary and very sophisticated. Above all, it is a subtle, elegant environment that does not need to flash its designer credentials. One look shows that everything in the room was well thought out and planned.

In the entrance vestibule, panels of naturally finished vertical wooden slats slide open to reveal the closets. The smoothness of the finish highlights the sensuous natural grain of the wood.

The slats continue into the minibar, a floor-to-ceiling mirror-backed cabinet. The mirror plays visual games with the open slat shelves, reflecting the polished wood and the rest of the room in a forest of images. The counterpoint between slats and mirror, of solid and void, is stunning.

Woven seagrass, another local material from the Visayan Sea, introduces another texture on the headboard and covering the luggage rack.

This is Filipino furniture at its sophisticated, world-class best. The desk is covered by a laminated bamboo top that bows slightly outwards, anchoring itself to a television cabinet whose doors are made of open bamboo slats woven together with a leather thong. The nodes of the bamboo show through the light varnish that the furniture is finished with. The excellent

A REAL/E3

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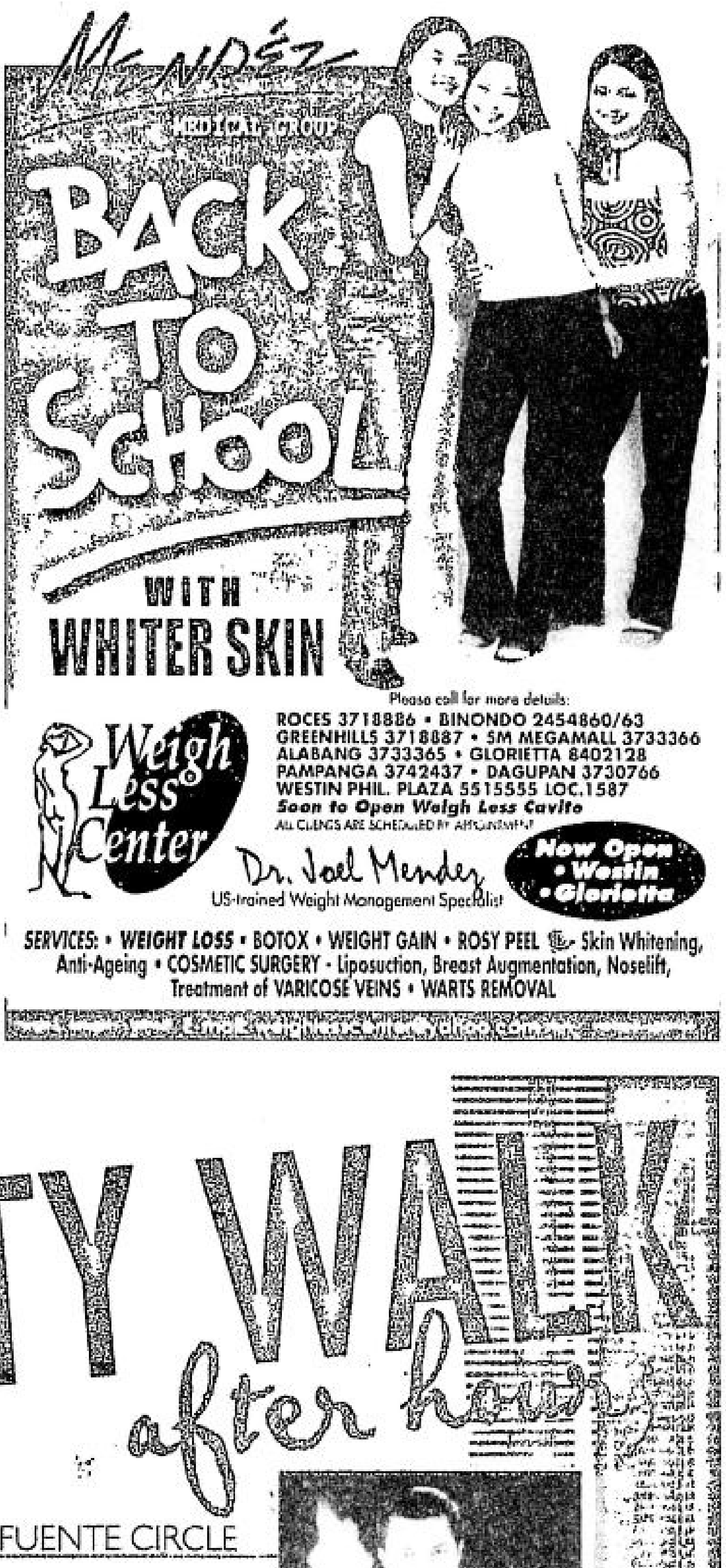

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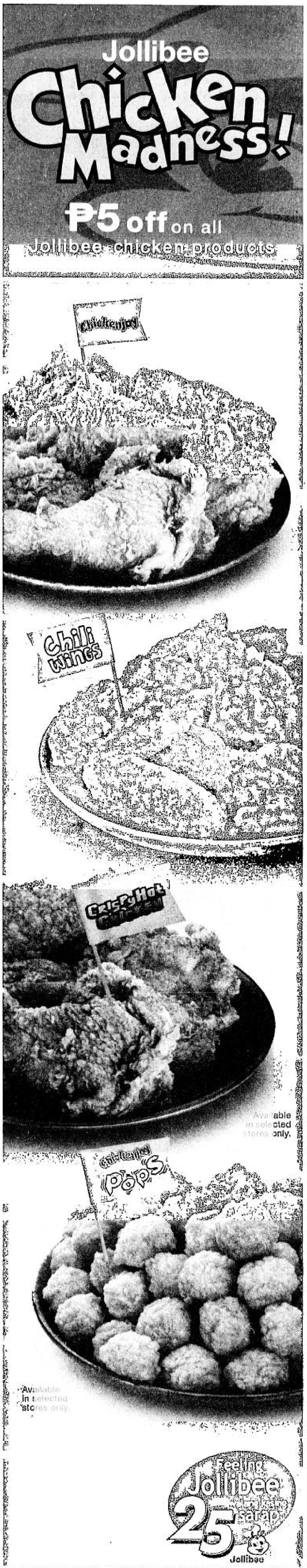

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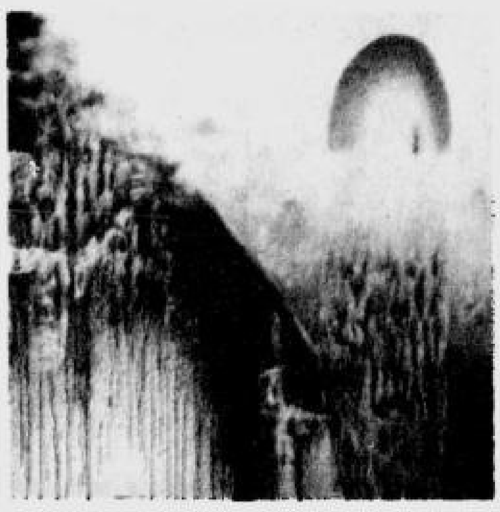
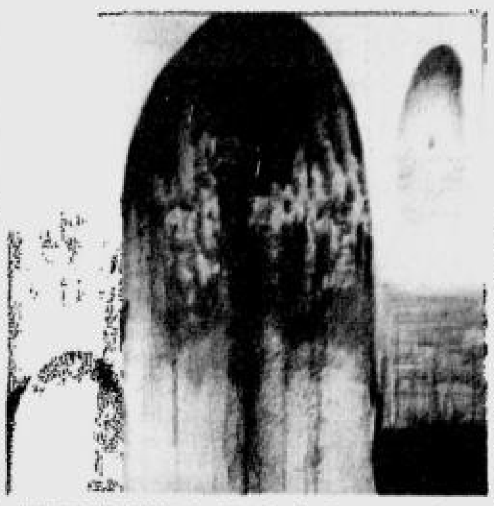
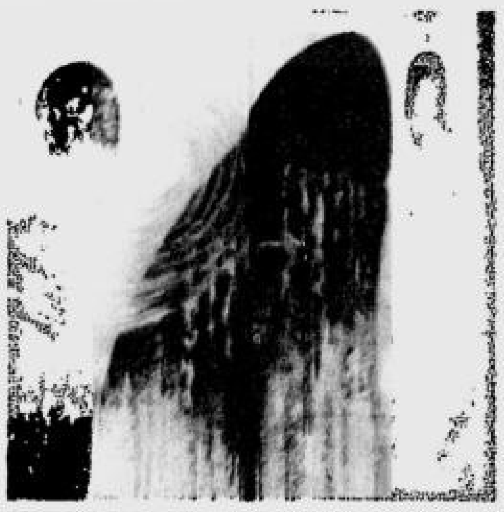

"WHAT You See Is Not What You Think"


"THE WEAKER the Body, the Stronger the Soul"


"WINDMILLS of Your Mind"

BUTCH PAYAWAL

From the carnal to the spiritual

By Constantino C. Tejero

AFTER his exhibit of powerful erotic art in Big & Small Art Co. last year, painter Butch Payawal started studying Zen, and has since been imbibing the philosophy and its discipline. It can be said then that he is now trying to cast away the extra baggage of being human, and transcend his temporal and corporeal existence.

The result of this soul-enriching experience is the exhibit "Satisfied Mind," Payawal's recent works in acrylic on canvas, until today in Galerie Astra at the Art Pavilion, 2/F, LRI Business Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia St., Makati City (across Alliance Française de Manille).

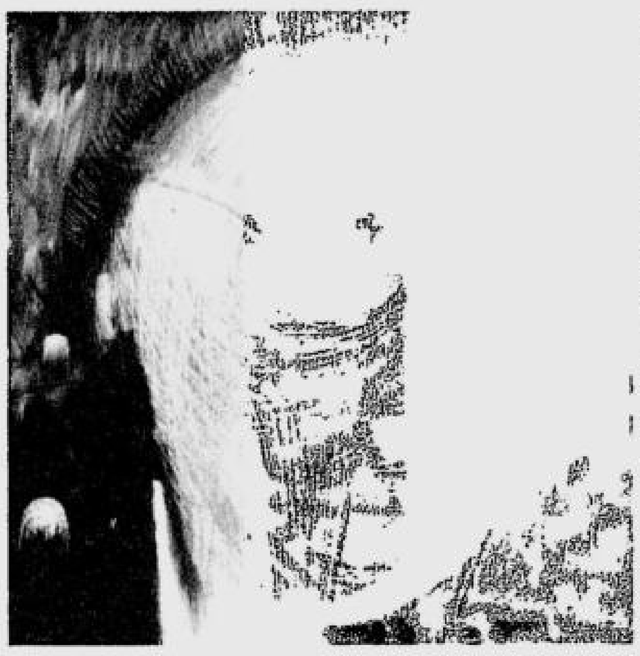
Mounted in three exhibit areas of this new gallery are 18 pieces, three of them diptychs, depicting what look like African masks and fantastical monochromatic landscape.

Some witty or poetic lines are incorporated into the artworks. The text is not directly linked to the image on the canvas, however.

"They're just my expressions of love, frustration, anger," says Payawal.

"Satisfied Mind Series 7" includes this lovely line evocative of Rilke and Goethe: "I can feel your pain. You're still you, after all."

No. 13 has this text: "Don't attempt to teach a pig to sing. It wastes your time and irritates the pig."


"SATISFIED Mind Series 15"

No. 1 says: "You're not a chess player, so you don't know the meaning of sacrifice."

Payawal is a chess player, and the sacrifice he is referring to is the one artists must make if they want to remain true to their art.

"It will pay back," he says. *"Babalik sa 'yo 'yan."*

He himself took that sacrifice when he left the material world of advertising last year to become a struggling full-time artist. He has found kindred spirits in other artists who may not be hot sellers but continue practicing their principles despite poverty, clinging to their aesthetic ideals.

"Pangangatawanan na natin 'to," he told them one time, *"kahit maglalangoy tayo sa putikan."*

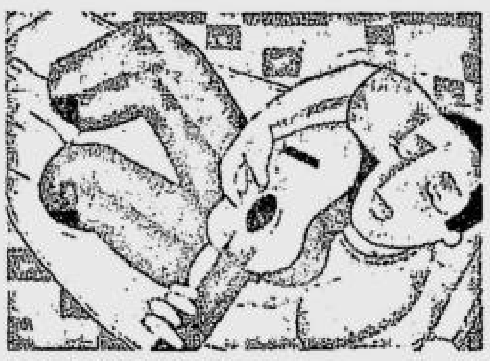
Landscape of sadness

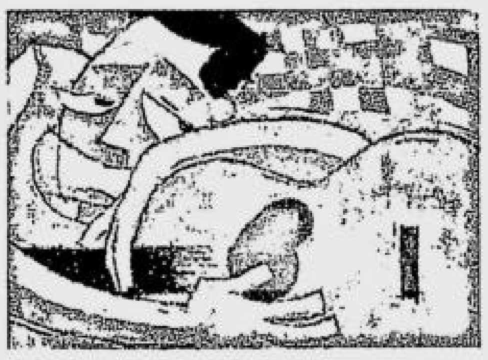
The world he left behind is reflected in No. 11, which the artist says is a self-portrait during his wild advertising years of decadence and excess.

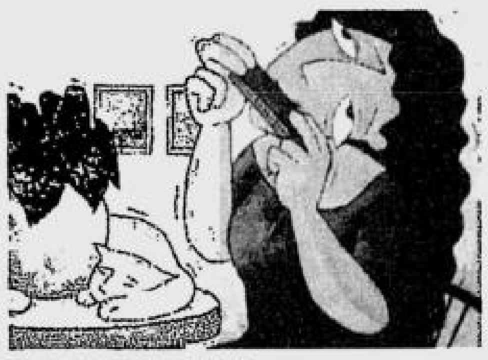
The text says: "Before, I used to have 10 pencils, when I only needed one." The image could be of Dorian Gray, with the lower portion of the face fading into drippings of white impasto, like flesh disintegrating.

With a fine arts degree from the University of Santo Tomas and further studies in industrial design, book design, illustration and typography at the Design Center of the Philip-

FROM/ E3


"KAPAHINGAHAN"


"KASAKASAMA sa Lungkot at Saya"

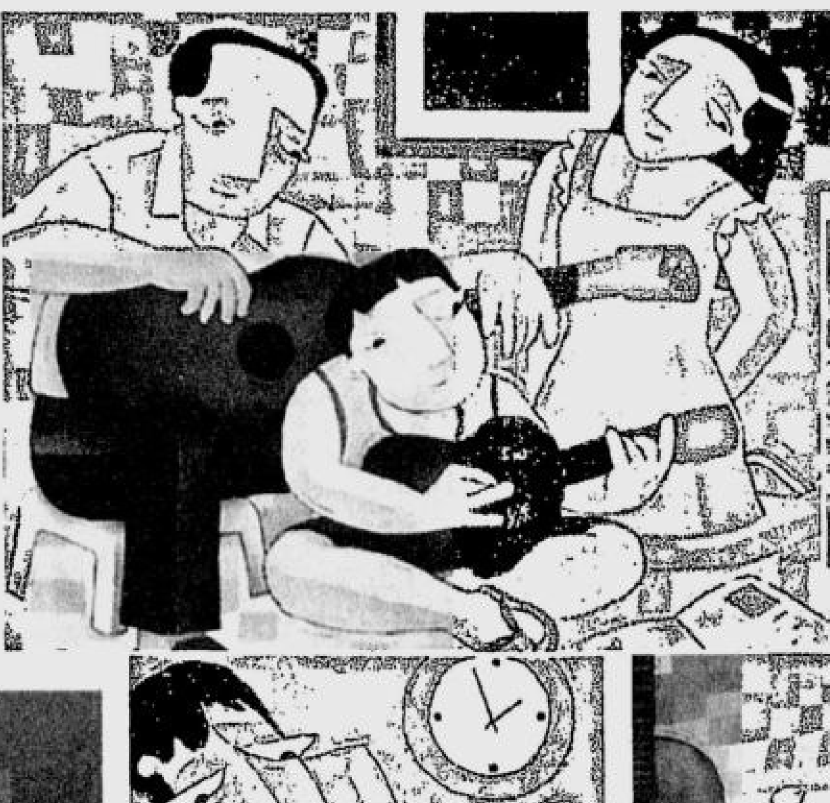

"IHIP-IHIP, Idlip-Idlip"

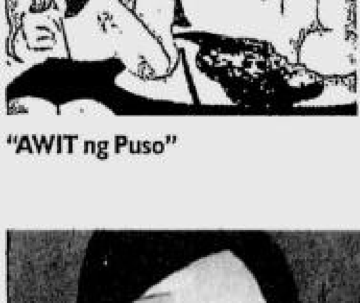
Artist plays beautiful music at Nine

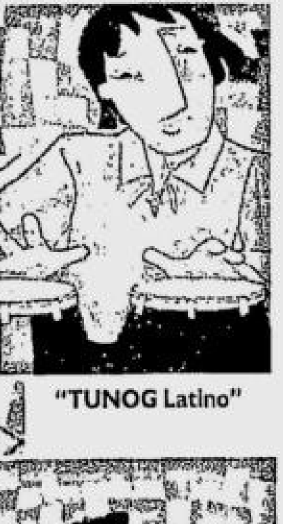
SELF-TAUGHT art expressionist Jun Balasbas mounts his first one-man show on June 11 in Gallery Nine, Megamall A.

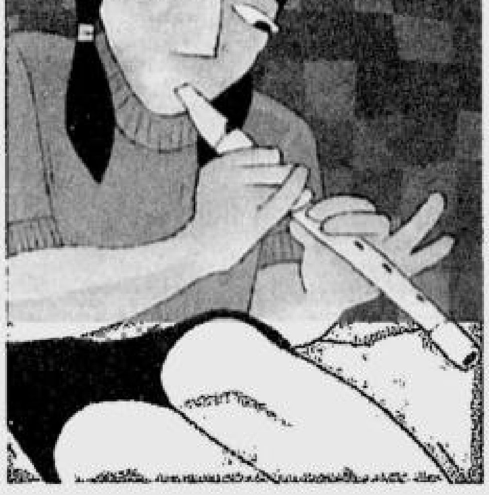
"Musikero" features colorful visual renditions of musicians with varying instruments in lively and whimsical poses.

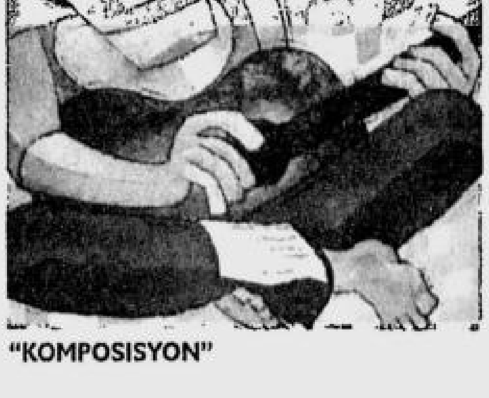
The show runs until June 22.

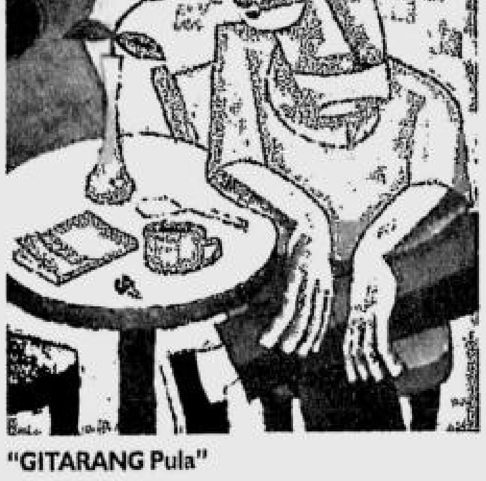

"UNANG Tipa"


"AWIT ng Puso"


"TUNOG Latino"


"HIMIG ng Kawayan"


"KOMPOSISYON"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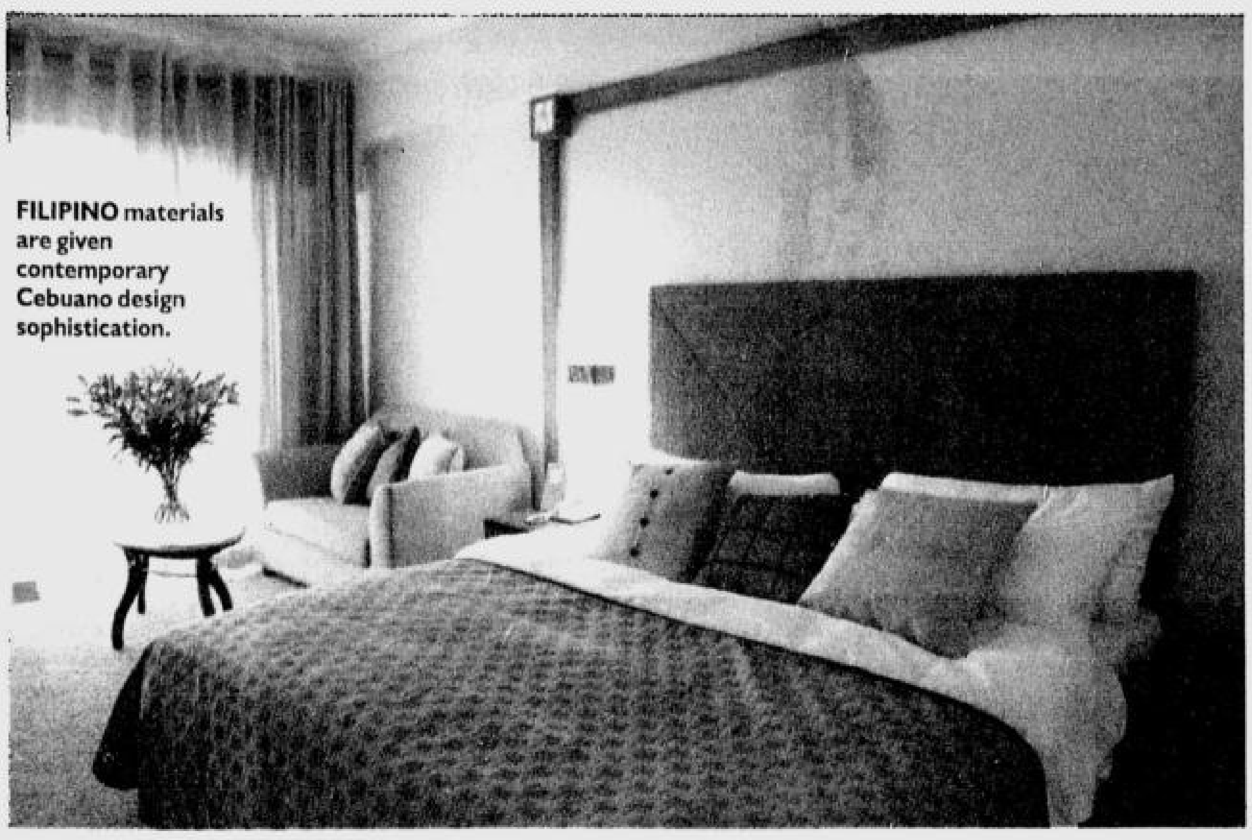
The country's national bookstore



FILIPINO materials are given contemporary Cebuano design sophistication.

A real Shangri-La in the South

From page E1

craftsmanship is for the eye to appreciate. The natural qualities of the materials are left for the eye to see.

Beyond the terrace of the room is a breathtaking view of the Visayan Sea, with the mountains of Leyte at the horizon. That is nature at its best.

The hotel goes through great effort to maintain a balance with the nature that surrounds it.

Mactan Island Resort is not just all hotel glitz. Beyond the spit and polish of its new look there is solid environmental concern, enough concern to merit the Mother Nature Award given last year by the Pollution Control Association of the Philippines.

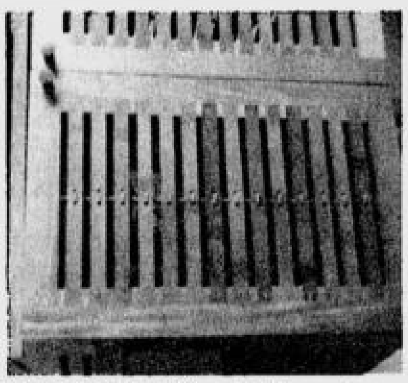
Sustainability

The hotel's sustainability measures include a sewage-treatment plant that processes waste water, treats and cleans it to the point of providing recycled water for irrigation and landscape maintenance. An in-house desalination plant produces the entire drinking-water supply for the resort.

In parched Cebu where overpopulation has stretched the supply of fresh water to its limit, the water treatment measures of the Mactan Island Resort provides a welcome relief to the local water district.

Supported by the Marine Development Department, the hotel staff diligently transplants loose coral to regenerate coral life and to eventually construct a permanent coral garden abundant with marine life. To protect the area where the regeneration program takes place, it has been declared a beach and marine sanctuary by the authorities of Lapu-Lapu City on Mactan Island.

The environmental concern goes hand in hand with the deliberate sourcing of local materials by Cebuano manufacturers for the new furniture and furnishings of the hotel rooms and public areas. It demonstrates the commitment of the Shangri-La Mactan Island Resort to the local community. It proves that the benefits from responsible tourism development cannot be lasting unless shared between the developer and the local community.



BAMBOO slats joined at the center with a leather thong are the doors for the television console.

In October this year, Shangri-La's Mactan Island Resort will have been a part of the local community for 10 years.

E-mail the author at afvillalon@hotmail.com

From the carnal . . .

From page E2

pines, Payawal is into multimedia. Aside from painting, he also does installation, graphic art, performance art, spontaneous poetry reading, printmaking (lithography, etching).

Of Filipino artists, he counts Victorio Edades, Onib Olmedo and Roberto Chabet as his Top 3.

"Inspired *ako sa kanila*," he says.

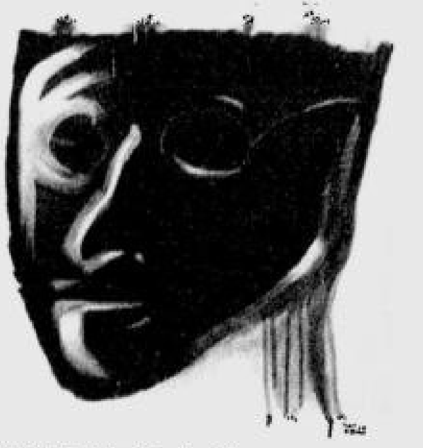
The three diptychs in the exhibit the artist calls his landscape of sadness and desolation. The imagery expresses his reaction to a tragedy that recently struck his family.

Here is a case of the proverbial artist's mood reflected in a monochrome of blue, gray, black, white and streaks of brown.

The first diptych, "What You See Is Not What You Think," has this koan: "What is love? The total absence of fear. What is fear? Love."

In the second, "The Weaker the Body, the Stronger the Soul," is a line of world-weariness and calm acceptance: *"Hindi lahat ng araw masaya."*

The third, "Windmills of Your Mind," speaks of acid rain and tears.



"SATISFIED Mind Series 6"

Choice of colors

The family tragedy has so affected the artist that outrage, frustration and sorrow commingle and result in an intense desire to come face to face with God. Thus this landscape, all painted in monochrome.

"I'm actually a colorist, but my moods affect my choice of colors," says Payawal. "Or maybe I'm now more discriminating with colors. I can do really colorful work, *kaya ko rin 'yan, kung pangbenta lang*. In my wild days, *mga kulay ko pumipilantik talaga*."

Amid this feeling of unease and discontent and imagery of turmoil and disintegration, he calls these diptychs his image of God. And, indeed, there is some sense of peace and harmony here, in the unity of rock, water and sky.

As for the Aboriginal visages, the artist says there's no symbolism in their patterns and shapes, they're just spontaneous strokes, plain forms and embellishments.

"I was inspired by the Dalai Lama, Christ, all my idols, the true artists, even Efren "Bata" Reyes—all those who sacrifice," he says. "Those are not necessarily their faces but in thoughts only. They're very personal."

After 15 years of childless marriage, Payawal's wife recently gave birth to a premature child, which died after a day. He has since come to terms with it, resulting in these artworks.

Okay *lang*, he now can say of that tragedy. And this is where Zen comes in.

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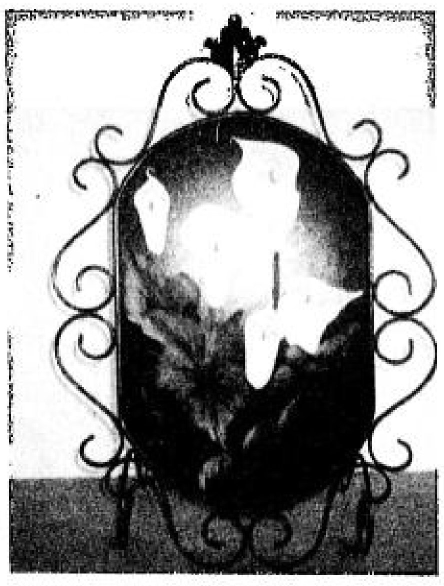

"CALLA Lilies Abloom" by Addie Sycip Cukingan

VISUAL ARTS

US-BASED Filipino artist Rene J. Marquez presents "St. Francis and the Firenze Dogs," a documentary painting series about his recent visits to the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi and to an animal refuge in Florence. "Especially in the light of recent world events, I find myself wanting to find faith in the kind of humanity that St. Francis embodied and, in general, in the justice of a greater order," he said. The show runs at the West Gallery of the SM Megamall on June 12-28. Call 634-1284.

ADDIE Sycip Cukingan presents her paintings of calla lilies, peonies, hydrangeas, magnolias, red banderas, mil flores and lotus in "Floral Splendor" on June 15-31 at the Renaissance Art Gallery of SM Megamall. Call 637-3101.

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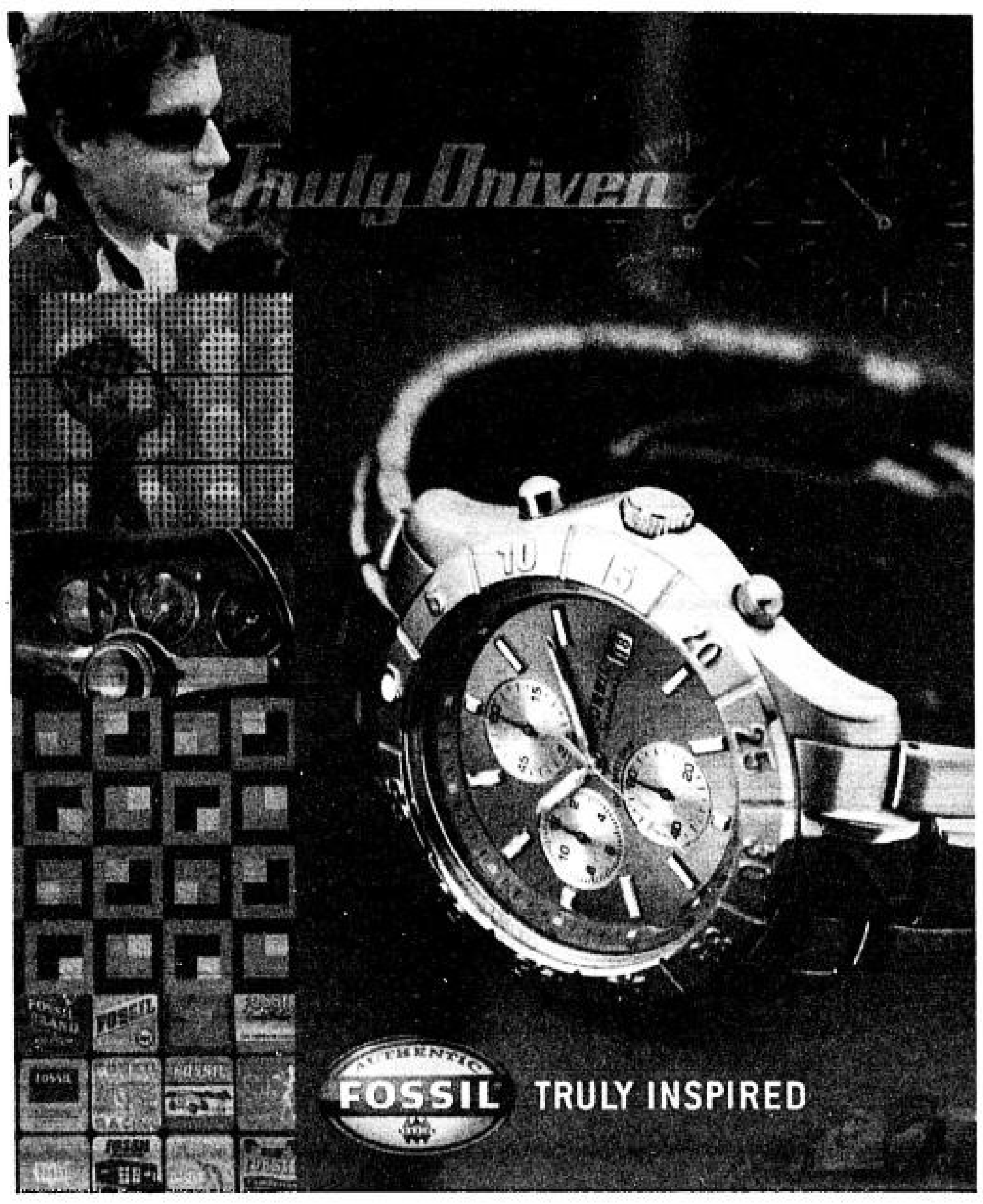

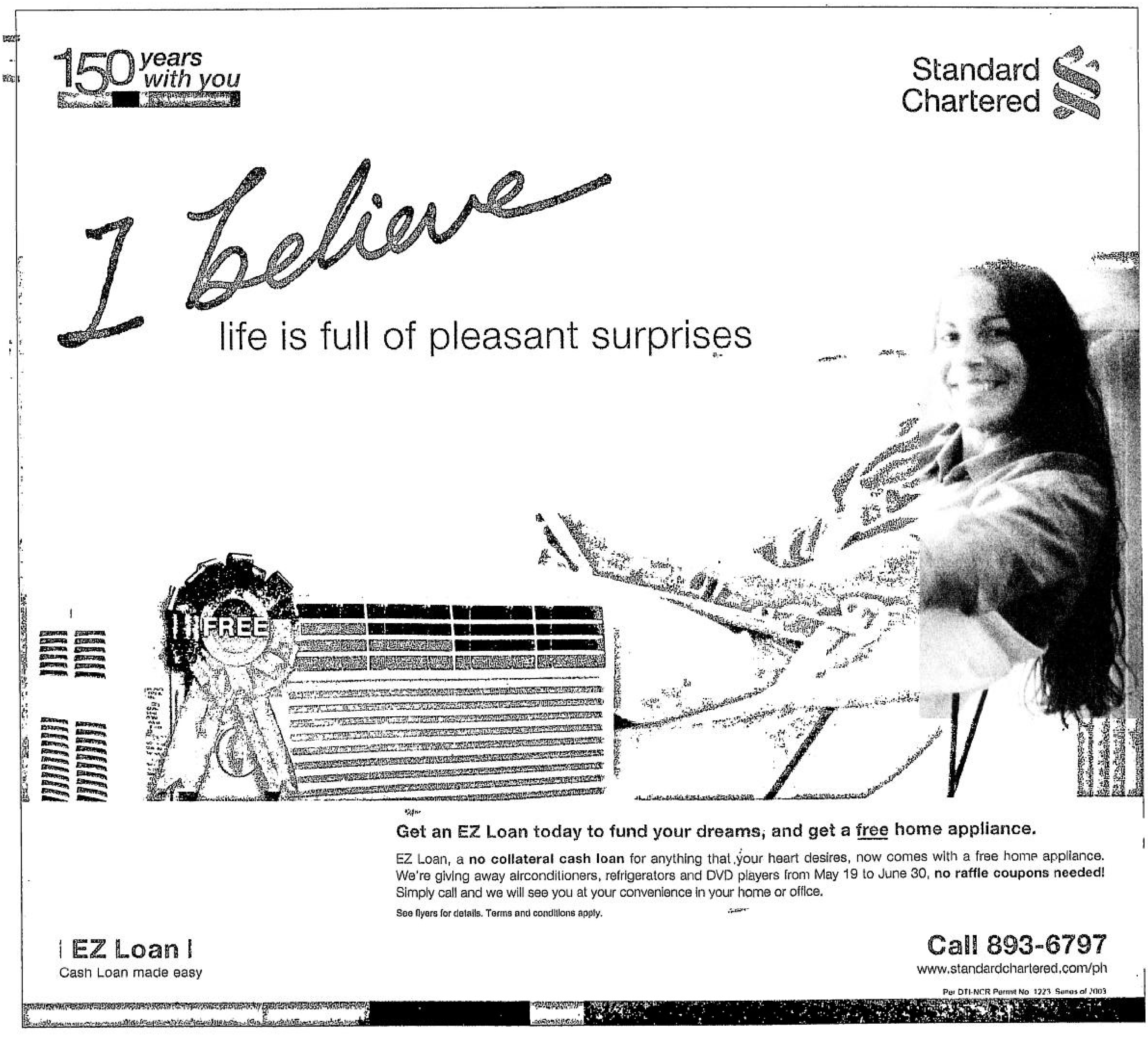

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EXTENDED TIE REG. NO. H 2002-408

MONDAY,
JUNE 9, 2003

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
LIFESTYLE
Books
F1

FUJITSU-SIEMENS
Primergy Econel 30
Intel Pentium IV 2.4GHz
256MB DDR RAM
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P61,500.00
Fujitsu Philippines, Inc. 894-8556/894-8552
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American Technologies, Inc. 723-0601 up to 12

Books to chase rainy blues away

THIS month, PowerBooks Specialty Store offers a varied selection of books to warm up your rainy days.

Michele Morgan's "A Magical Course in Tarot" is an easy-to-use guide on how to tap into intuition and unlock the tarot's timeless wisdom.

In the book "Common Mistakes Singles Make," Mary Whelchel shows her understanding of the pitfalls for single Christians. She offers biblical solutions for frustrations, desires and longings that can lead to mistakes.

"Bosie: The Man, the Poet, the Lover of Oscar Wilde" is about the poet Lord Alfred Douglas. Douglas Murray's access to letters and key literary manuscripts resulted in this biography of the fascinating dissolute, well-born and beautiful young man, who played an important role in the events that led to Wilde's trial and imprisonment.

Fans of the prolific writer Mary Higgins Clark will find in "Kitchen Privileges: A Memoir" an honest and touching account of the events that shaped her life as a writer and person.

In the thriller "From the Corner of His Eye," best-selling author Dean Koontz tells a story of courage revolving around Bartholomew Lampion, who was blinded at three. It is a tale of heart-stopping suspense and high adventure.

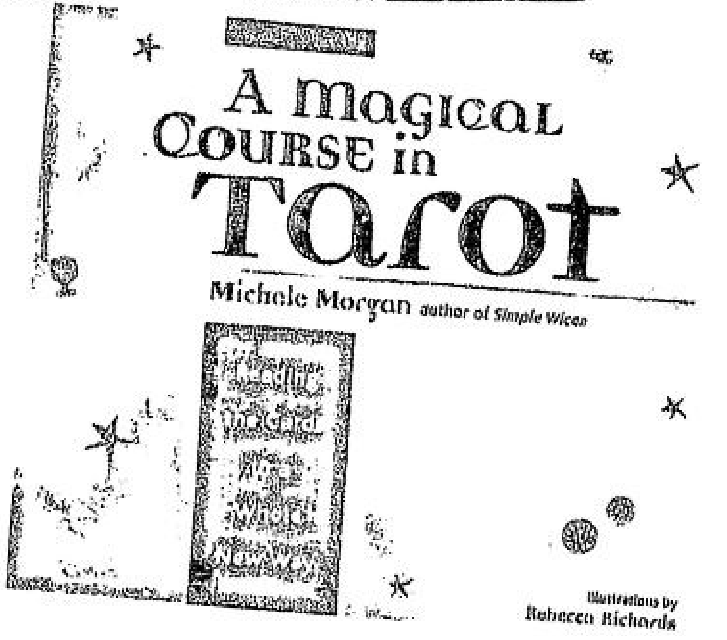
"Rich Dad's Advisors: Loopholes of the Rich," is part of the phenomenal "Rich Dad, Poor Dad" series. It discusses the tax strategies of the rich: how to control how much tax to pay and when to pay it.

"America," which is on the New York Times best-seller list, tells of the mysterious disappearance of the world's most technically advanced nuclear submarine, USS America, on its maiden voyage. Rear Admiral Joke Grafton has the task of solving the mystery, which can bring an entire nation to its knees.

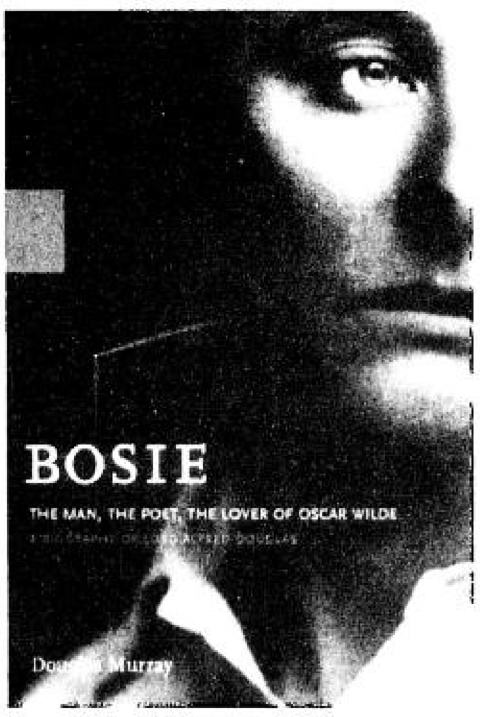
The first in C.S. Lewis' space trilogy, "Out of the Silent Planet" is where the adventures of the remarkable Dr. Ransom begins with his abduction by aliens that brought him to the red planet of Malacandra. It was first published in 1943.

"The Fifth Mountain" is Paulo Coelho's inspiring story of the biblical prophet Elijah. It tells of how Elijah was forced to choose between his newly discovered love and his overwhelming sense of duty.

"Baby on Board" is about Molly who suddenly finds herself single, pregnant with no job and out of luck. Bringing up her baby alone, is Molly's life over now that her car has a sticker saying "Baby on Board?"


A Magical Course in Tarot
Michele Morgan author of Simple Wicca
Illustrations by Rebecca Richards

Mary Higgins Clark
Kitchen Privileges



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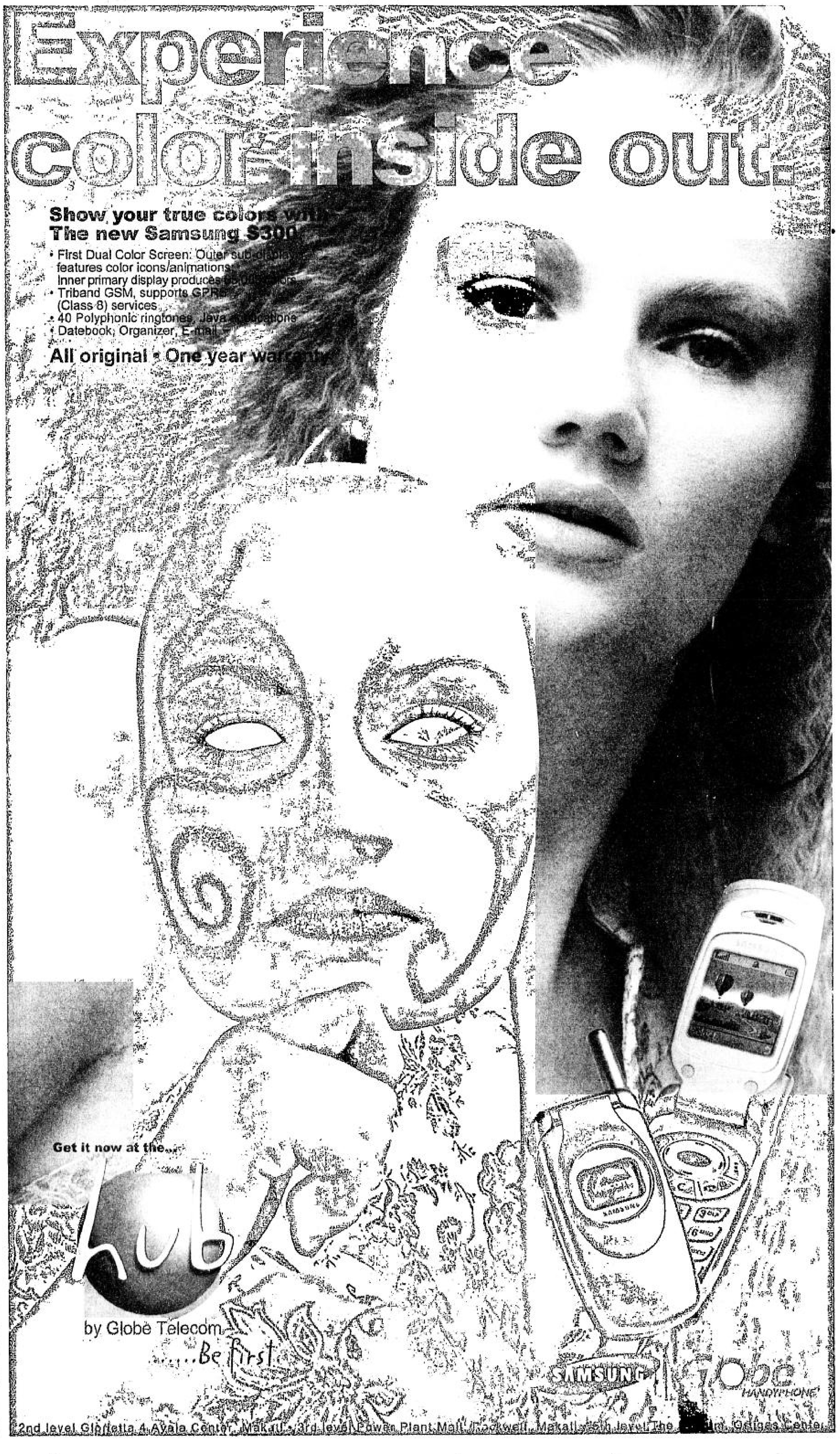

Show your true colors with The new Samsung S300
- First Dual Color Screen: Outer sub-display features color icons/animations; Inner primary display produces 65,000 colors
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- 40 Polyphonic ringtones, Java applications
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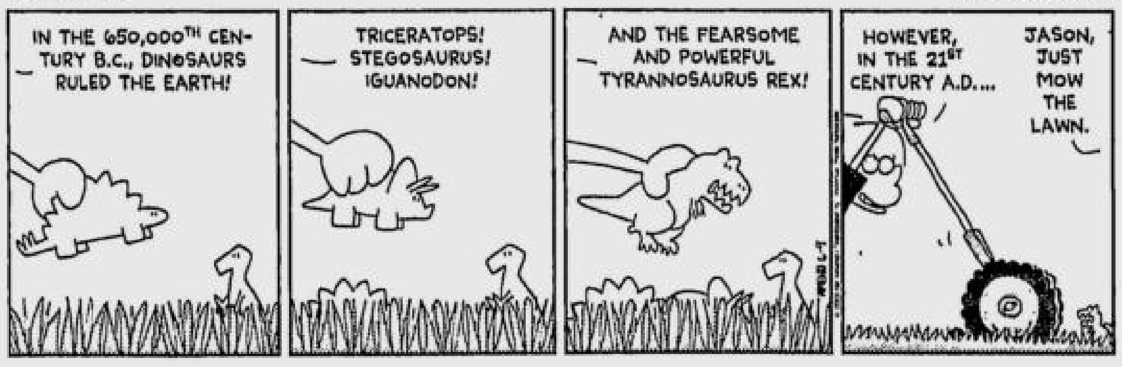
....Be first
2nd level Glorietta 4 Ayala Center, Makati • 3rd level Power Plant Mall, Rockwell, Makati • 5th level The [illegible], Ortigas Center

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

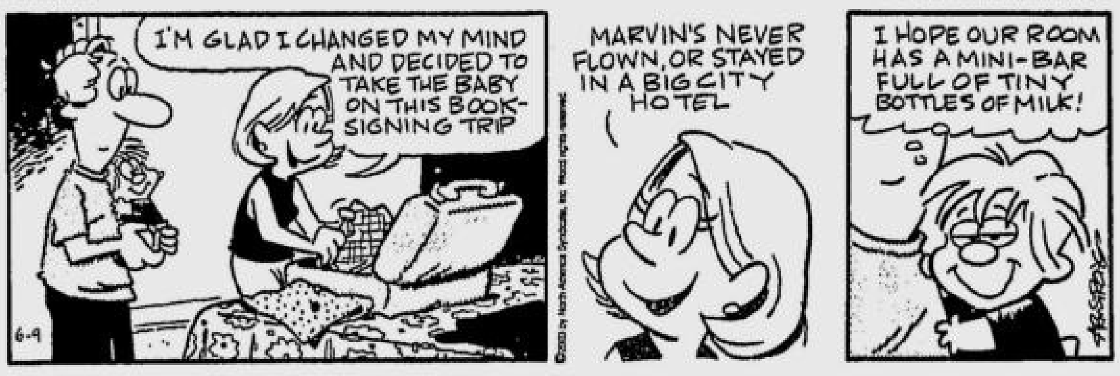
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


IN THE 650,000TH CENTURY B.C., DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH!
TRICERATOPS! STEGOSAURUS! IGUANODON!
AND THE FEARSOME AND POWERFUL TYRANNOSAURUS REX!
HOWEVER, IN THE 21ST CENTURY A.D....
JASON, JUST MOW THE LAWN.

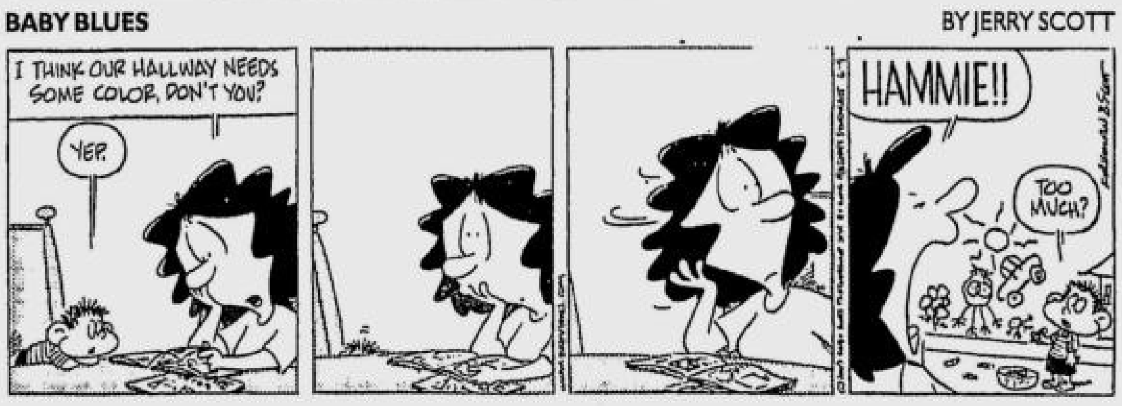
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I'M GLAD I CHANGED MY MIND AND DECIDED TO TAKE THE BABY ON THIS BOOK-SIGNING TRIP
MARVIN'S NEVER FLOWN, OR STAYED IN A BIG CITY HOTEL
I HOPE OUR ROOM HAS A MINI-BAR FULL OF TINY BOTTLES OF MILK!
6-9

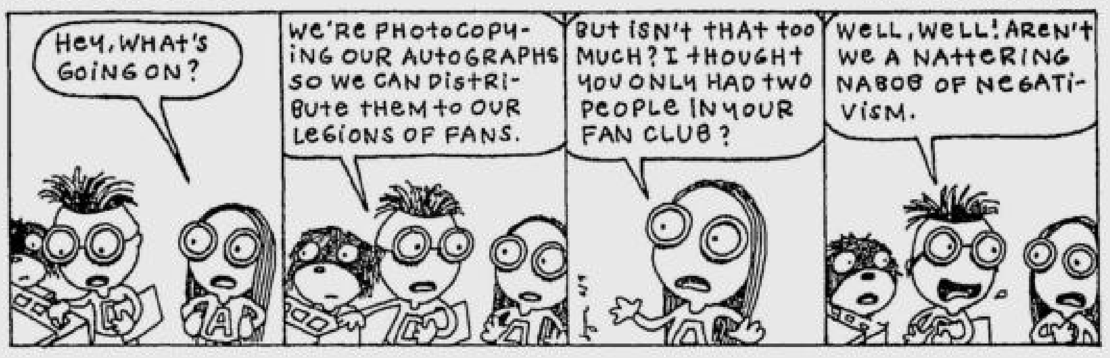
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


I THINK OUR HALLWAY NEEDS SOME COLOR, DON'T YOU?
YEP.
HAMMIE!!
TOO MUCH?

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HEY, WHAT'S GOING ON?
WE'RE PHOTOCOPYING OUR AUTOGRAPHS SO WE CAN DISTRIBUTE THEM TO OUR LEGIONS OF FANS.
BUT ISN'T THAT TOO MUCH? I THOUGHT YOU ONLY HAD TWO PEOPLE IN YOUR FAN CLUB?
WELL, WELL! AREN'T WE A NATTERING NABOB OF NEGATIVISM.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are a clever, forceful communicator. You are also strong-minded and outspoken about your views. You rely on logic and experience to make your decisions. You have a constant, youthful flair that attracts others to you. Focus on your closest relationships this year. Some partnerships will end; some partnerships will begin.
Birthdate of: Natalie Portman, actress; Michael J. Fox, actor; Johnny Depp, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Definitely hold on to your temper today. Intense encounters with siblings, relatives and neighbors test your patience. You don't have to prove anything. Relax and mellow out.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Disagreements about money or how to spend a limited amount of funds are likely today. Always remember you attract more flies with honey than you do with vinegar.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Power struggles with partners and close friends make this a hard way to start off the week. If you must put your cards on the table, at least be polite and civil.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Objects and machinery could break down today at work. This means you will have to stop and repair them. Similarly, relationships with co-workers might also need to be mended.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Be patient with children today. Studies have proved that youngsters do not think the way we do. Children are not just little adults—they're kids.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Your wisest course is to avoid head-on confrontations with parents and VIPs today. Refrain from saying unkind things. (Plus, it's beneath you.) Confucius said, "He who flings dirt loses ground."

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): It is ridiculous to argue about religion and profound philosophical subjects today. Some people like rice; some people like potatoes; some people like bread. Different people like different starch.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Avoid places with high crime rates today. Trust everyone and always lock your door. Do not tempt the honest soul. (And avoid risky schemes!)

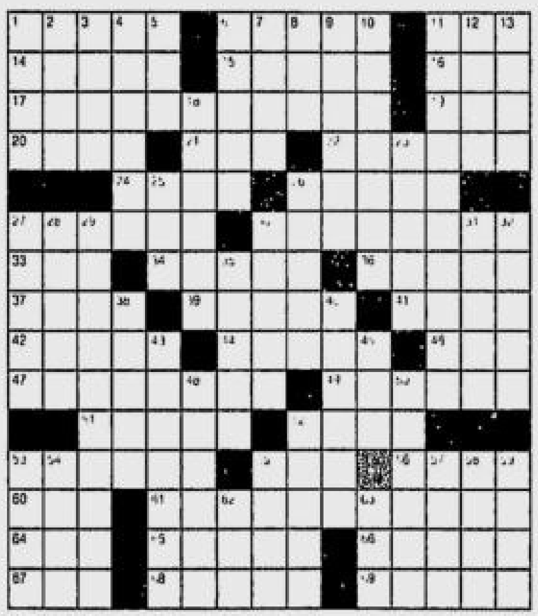
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're ready to make big changes in your life. One of the reasons you can make these sweeping changes now is that you did not have the power to do it before.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Expect delays, breakdowns and problems at work today. These breakdowns will apply to machinery, technology and even your relationships with co-workers. (Most things can be fixed, however.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Lovers' quarrels are very likely today. Basically, this is a clash of egos. However, this could be your opportunity to air your grievances and clear up sticky situations.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Avoid heavy discussions at home. If you want to talk about touchy subjects, choose a better day! Instead, go out and do something else. (Anger serves no purpose except to make everyone miserable.)

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Edgar Fontaine
Dighton, MA
6/9/03

ACROSS
1 Based on eight
6 Licorice flavor
11 Old Testament sufferer
14 Pat or Debby
15 Ease off
16 In the past
17 Merry old soul
19 "__ Me a River"
20 Icelandic saga
21 __ Ridge Boys
22 Didn't hold water
24 Glowing review
26 Janet of "Psycho"
27 Mexican dish
30 Reports
33 Muhammad __
34 Senior
36 Dawdle
37 Breathing: abbr.
39 Cosecants' reciprocals
41 Social slight
42 Handlelike parts
44 Decree
46 Lilly or Whitney
47 Topless, perhaps
49 Ladd or Miller
51 I give up!
52 Boxer Spinks
53 Vanquish
55 Instant lawn
56 "Star Trek: TNG" android
60 __ Wiedersehen!
61 Man who met a pie man
64 Choler
65 Post sans postage
66 Like Wrigley Field's walls
67 Drunkard
68 Mends socks
69 Republican Roosevelt

DOWN
1 Clarinet's cousin
2 Frigid
3 Figure-skater Eldredge
4 Turkey's capital
5 Floral garland
6 Kelp, e.g.
7 Head support
8 Figure-skater Midori
9 Morose
10 Certain fencer
11 Boy in the corner
12 Monster
13 "Ben Hur" co-star
18 Works of fiction
23 Turkish VIPs
25 Friar Tuck's quaff
26 Enticed
27 "__ Bulba"
28 Coeur d'__, ID
29 Maiden on a tuffet
30 Literary grouping
31 Verily
32 Actress Thorndike
35 Semiconductor
38 "Common Sense" writer
40 Leave the Union
43 Crated
45 Letter after pi
48 Last syllable
50 Salad green
52 Droops laxly
53 Speaker's platform
54 Continental currency
55 Make a web
57 Surrounded by
58 Hammered on a slant
59 Opie's dad
62 Spoil the finish
63 Gain a lap?

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

A	C	C	U	S	E	■	D	I	S	S	E	V	E	R
C	A	R	N	E	Y	■	E	N	T	I	R	E	L	Y
T	R	I	S	T	E	■	S	T	E	F	A	N	I	E
O	B	S	E	S	S	■	K	U	R	T	■	E	G	G
N	O	P	E	■	O	S	S	I	E	■	S	T	I	R
E	N	S	N	A	R	L	■	T	O	S	H	I	B	A
■	■	■	■	L	E	A	F	■	S	H	O	A	L	S
S	C	H	U	B	■	B	O	B	■	R	E	N	E	S
L	E	E	R	E	D	■	R	O	P	E	■	■	■	■
A	L	G	I	E	R	S	■	R	E	D	U	C	E	S
P	L	U	S	■	A	T	S	E	A	■	N	A	N	A
P	A	L	■	O	B	O	E	■	C	R	I	M	E	S
E	R	A	S	A	B	L	E	■	H	A	T	E	R	S
R	E	T	I	T	L	E	D	■	E	M	E	R	G	E
S	T	E	P	H	E	N	S	■	S	P	R	A	Y	S

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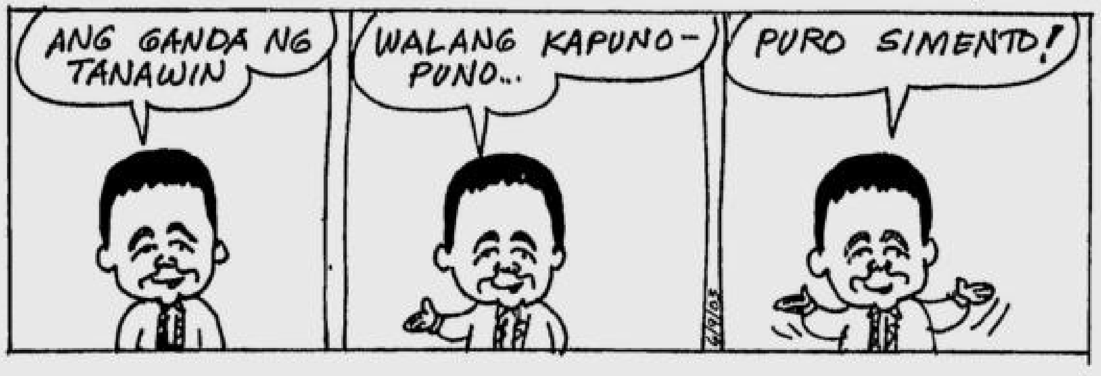
6/9/03

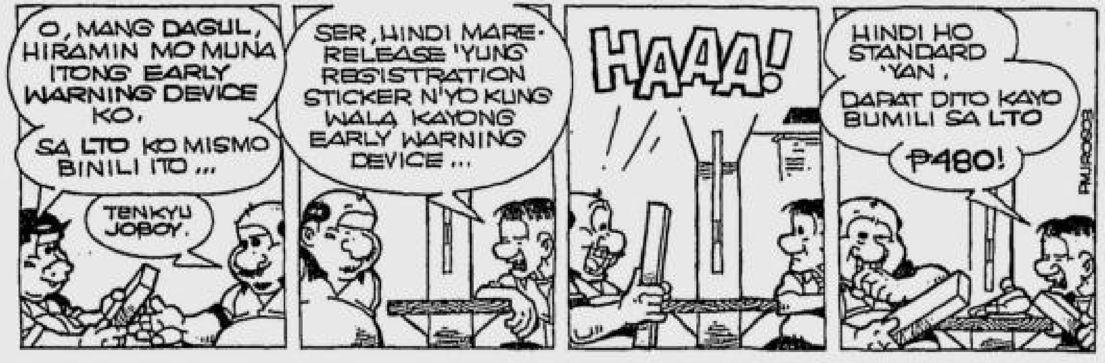
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANG GANDA NG TANAWIN
WALANG KAPUNO-PUNO...
PURO SIMENTO!
6/9/03

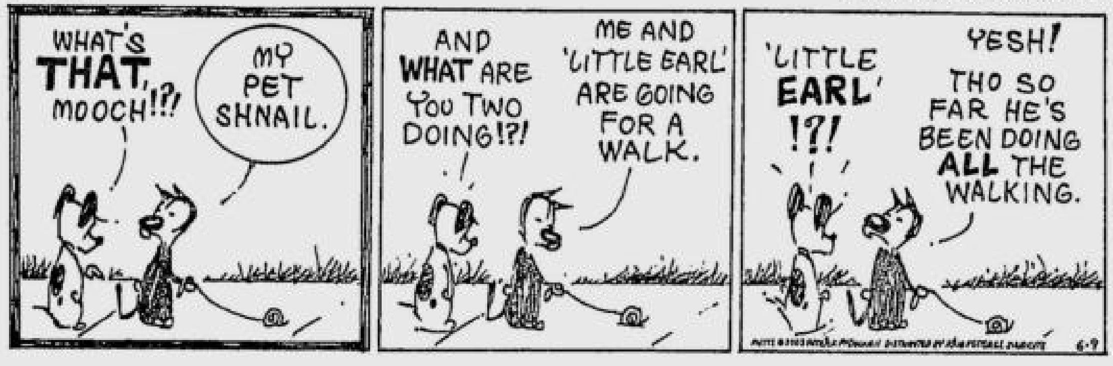
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


O, MANG DAGUL, HIRAMIN MO MUNA ITONG EARLY WARNING DEVICE KO.
SA LTO KO MISMO BINILI ITO ...
TENKYU JOBOY.
SER, HINDI MARE-RELEASE 'YUNG REGISTRATION STICKER N'YO KUNG WALA KAYONG EARLY WARNING DEVICE ...
HAAA!
HINDI HO STANDARD 'YAN.
DAPAT DITO KAYO BUMILI SA LTO
₱480!
PMJR2003

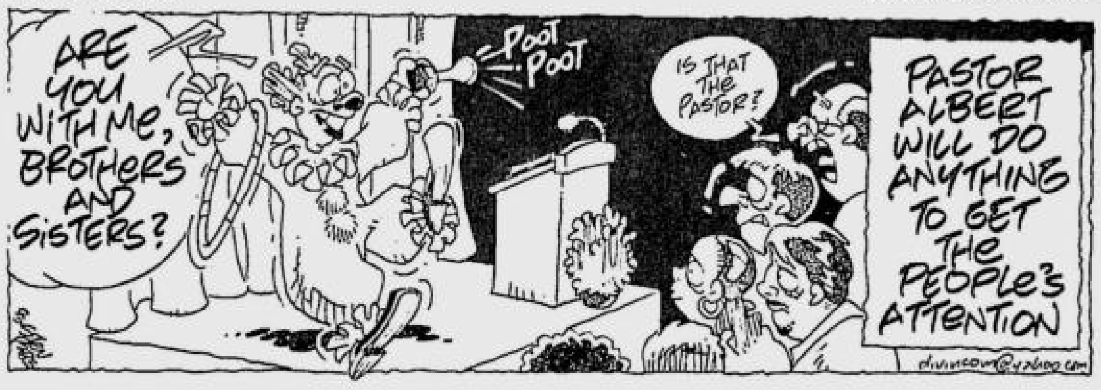
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WHAT'S THAT, MOOCH!?!
MY PET SHNAIL.
AND WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING!?!
ME AND 'LITTLE EARL' ARE GOING FOR A WALK.
'LITTLE EARL' !?!
YESH! THO SO FAR HE'S BEEN DOING ALL THE WALKING.
6-9

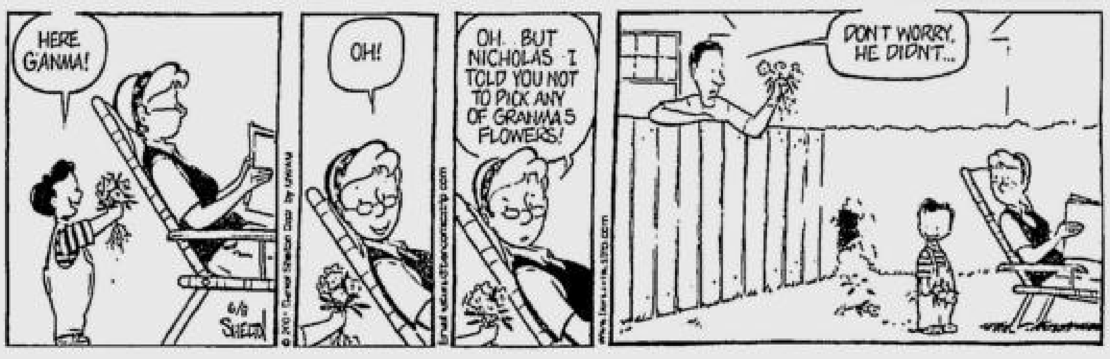
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


ARE YOU WITH ME, BROTHERS AND SISTERS?
POOT POOT
IS THAT THE PASTOR?
PASTOR ALBERT WILL DO ANYTHING TO GET THE PEOPLE'S ATTENTION
divinecom@yahoo.com

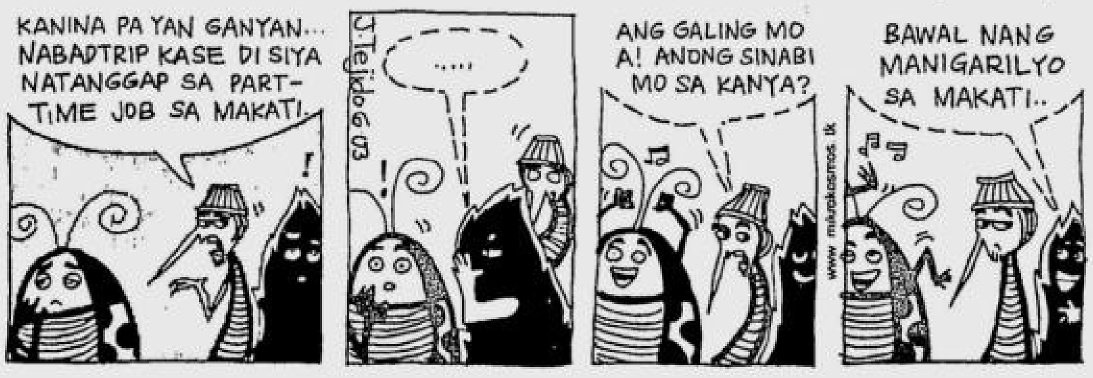
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


HERE GANMA!
OH!
OH. BUT NICHOLAS I TOLD YOU NOT TO PICK ANY OF GRANMA'S FLOWERS!
DON'T WORRY. HE DIDN'T...
6/9
SHELTON

MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


KANINA PA YAN GANYAN... NABADTRIP KASE DI SIYA NATANGGAP SA PART-TIME JOB SA MAKATI.
J.Tejido 6 03
.....
ANG GALING MO A! ANONG SINABI MO SA KANYA?
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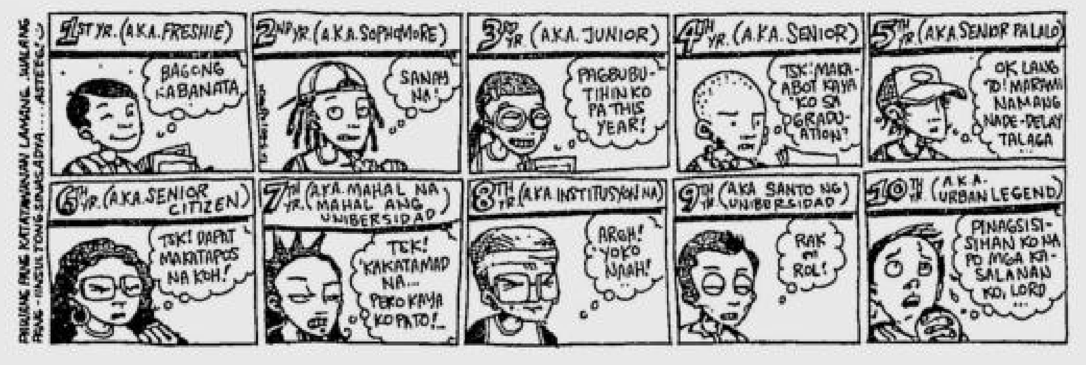
BAWAL NANG MANIGARILYO SA MAKATI..

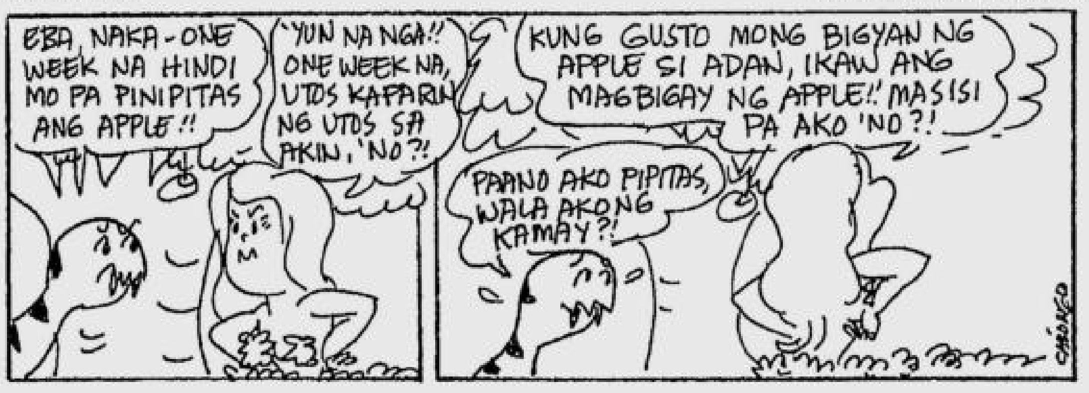
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


1ST YR. (A.K.A. FRESHIE)
BAGONG KABANATA
2ND YR. (A.K.A. SOPHOMORE)
SANAY NA!
3RD YR. (A.K.A. JUNIOR)
PAGBUBUTIHIN KO PA THIS YEAR!
4TH YR. (A.K.A. SENIOR)
TSK! MAKAABOT KAYA KO SA GRADUATION?
5TH YR. (A.K.A. SENIOR PALALO)
OK LANG 'TO! MARAMI NAMANG NADE-DELAY TALAGA
6TH YR. (A.K.A. SENIOR CITIZEN)
TSK! DAPAT MAKATAPOS NA KOH!
7TH YR. (A.K.A. MAHAL NA MAHAL ANG UNIBERSIDAD)
TSK! KAKATAMAD NA... PERO KAYA KO PA 'TO!
8TH YR. (A.K.A. INSTITUSYON NA)
ARGH! YOKO NAAH!
9TH YR. (A.K.A. SANTO NG UNIBERSIDAD)
RAK EN ROL!
10TH YR. (A.K.A. URBAN LEGEND)
PINAGSISISIHAN KO NA PO MGA KASALANAN KO, LORD ...

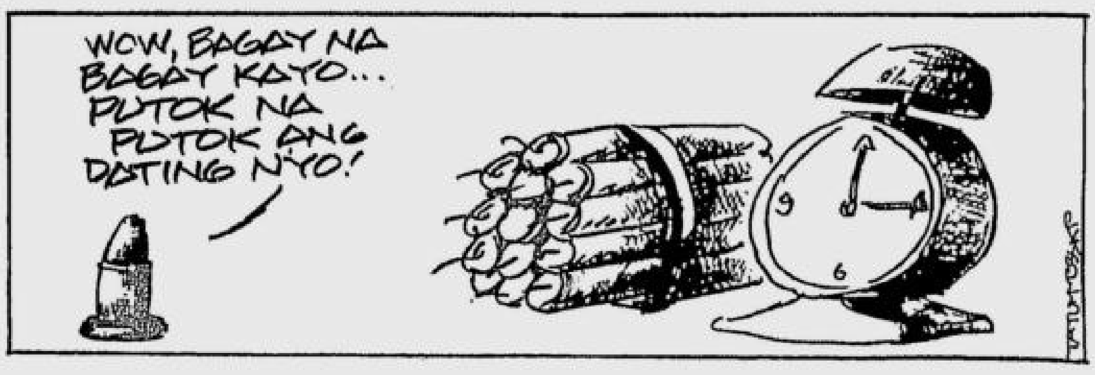
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


EBA, NAKA-ONE WEEK NA HINDI MO PA PINIPITAS ANG APPLE!!
'YUN NA NGA!! ONE WEEK NA, UTOS KAPA RIN NG UTOS SA AKIN, 'NO?!
KUNG GUSTO MONG BIGYAN NG APPLE SI ADAN, IKAW ANG MAGBIGAY NG APPLE!! MASISI PA AKO 'NO?!
PAANO AKO PIPITAS, WALA AKONG KAMAY?!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


WOW, BAGAY NA BAGAY KAYO... PUTOK NA PUTOK ANG DATING N'YO!
9
6
TATUMPOSKIP

'Adaptation' and 'Twisted Flicks' get twisted launch

FLIP Magazine once again offers a double treat for its readers this month.

Tomorrow, the magazine and its monthly FLIP Movie Club—a true cineastes' event exclusive to friends, readers and subscribers of FLIP Magazine—will be showing the 2003 Academy Award-winning film "Adaptation."

At the same time, the magazine will host the launch of FLIP publisher and editor Jessica Zafra's newest book, "Twisted Flicks," a compilation of the acclaimed writer's film reviews over the past decade.

"Adaptation" features Nicolas Cage, Meryl Streep and Chris Cooper, whose performance in the film recently won him an Oscar for Best Supporting Actor.

The movie revolves around a screenwriter's struggle to adapt a highly complex novel about the intriguing world of an orchid hunter, played by Cooper. In time, the book, the story and the lives portrayed therein begin to spiral out of control, putting both the writer's life and reputation in jeopardy.

"Twisted Flicks" is the latest in Anvil's series of "Twisted" books. Zafra's compilation of essays are consistent best sellers in the country's top book stores, and have strengthened her reputation as the funniest and one of the most intelligent and most important Filipino writers of her generation.

The Flip Movie Club's double offering of "Adaptation" and the launch of "Twisted Flicks" will be held tomorrow at the Greenbelt 1 Artfilm Theaters, Cinema 2. The program, exclusive to friends, readers and subscribers of FLIP Magazine, starts at 6 p.m.

The double event is sponsored by Globe GenTXT, Seattle's Best Coffee, Coca-Cola Philippines, Sky Films and Anvil Publishing. It is also supported by Sari-Sari Café, Streetlife Remix, Green Daisy and Chili Crab Pao. Call 750-3755.

A SCENE from the Oscar-winning film "Adaptation"

TWISTED FLICKS
Jessica Zafra

Book sale until June 15

NATIONAL Book Store is holding a sale until June 15. A 20-percent discount will be given on a wide range of imported books: children's fiction and literature, inspirational, art and design, business, world events.

Meanwhile, backpacks and pencil cases from NBS Basics are on sale at 20-percent off until the end of July.

New book on architectural authoritarianism out

"EDIFICE Complex: Power, Myth and Marcos State Architecture," by UP professor Gerard Lico, has just been released by the Ateneo Press.

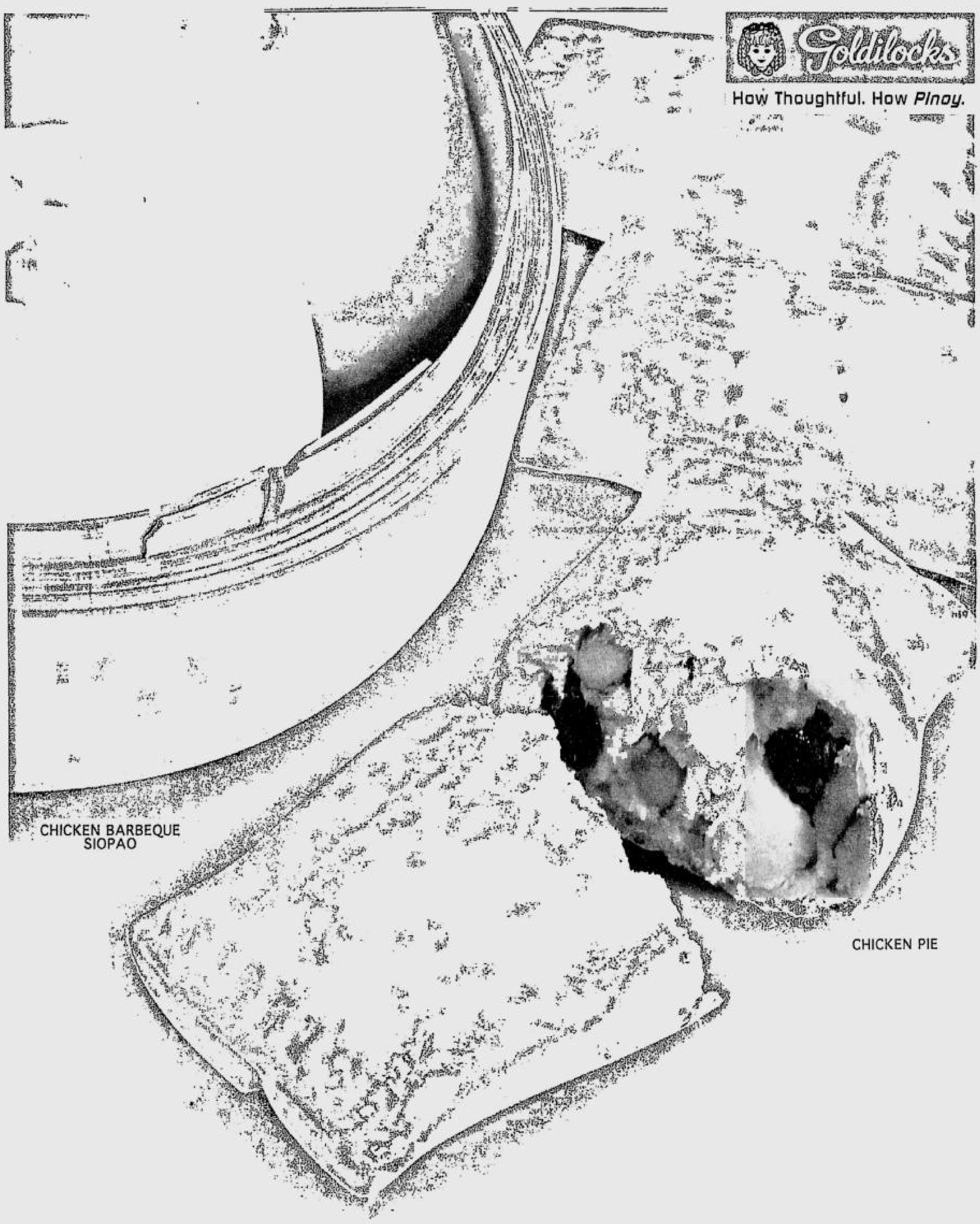
In this pioneering work, Lico looks at the relationship between architecture and society. He cites, for example, structures built under the Spanish and the American rule, and how these functioned as sites of colonial authority.

But the focus of Lico's work is how the Marcoses sought to strengthen and legitimize their power through the various edifices built during the Marcos regime, in particular the CCP Complex.

The book may be ordered through the Ateneo Press (tels. 426-5984/6001, 461-2113; unipress@admu.edu.ph), or through Popular, Solidaridad, PowerBooks and National Book Store branches nationwide.

EDIFICE COMPLEX
GERARD LICO

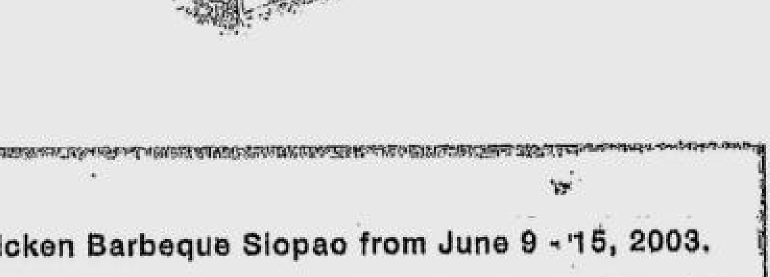
Goldilocks
How Thoughtful. How *Pinoy*.



Ngayong Father's Day,
si Daddy naman
ang pasalubungan.

Ngayong araw, i-surprise si Daddy ng malaman at masarap na Goldilocks Savory Box filled with delicious Chicken Pie, Chicken Barbeque Siopao or any of your favorite meat-filled products. Para maramdaman niya kung gaano talaga kabigat ang love n'yo sa kanya.

Other available meat-filled products:
Bola-bola Siopao, Asado Siopao and Adobo Roll



20% discount on every purchase of Chicken Barbeque Siopao from June 9 - 15, 2003.

Per DOH-BFAD Permit No. 0495, Series of 2003.

Book on Balangiga incident out

ON SEPT. 28, 1901, the United States Army suffered one of its humiliating defeats during the Philippine-American War in the remote town of Balangiga in Samar.

New Day Publishers, a leading religious and Filipiniana publisher, unravels some of the untold stories behind this historic event in its latest book —"The Balangiga Contact Revisited" by Rolando O. Borrinaga.

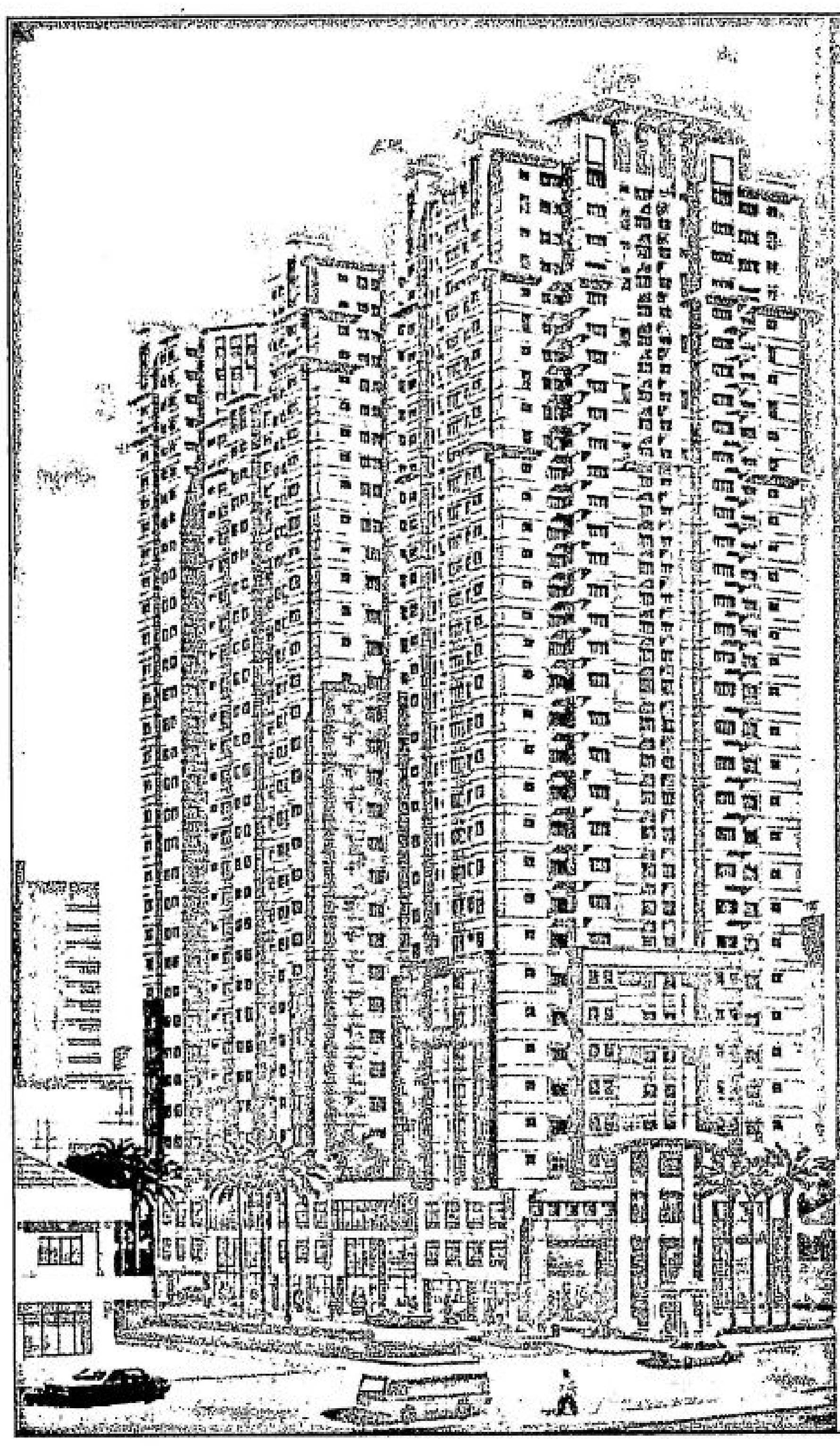
The 198-page, 10-chapter book establishes an expanded historical context on the attack of the natives on Company C of the Ninth U.S. Infantry Regiment in Balangiga. The attack was actually a retaliation because of a string of abuses the Americans had committed against the populace. Two officers of the Company were killed, and the rest of the troop were nearly decimated by poorly armed townsfolk who executed a masterful war strategy.

THE BALANGIGA CONFLICT REVISITED
Rolando O. Borrinaga

The author proposes the adoption of the term "Balangiga Conflict" as the "politically correct" label in place of "Balangiga Massacre," coined by American historians to portray the US troops as victims of the clash.

In retaliation, the American troops under Gen. Jacob Smith turned Samar into a "howling wilderness" with his "kill and burn" campaign, and the tell-tale Balangiga Church bells, which were tolled during the attack, were taken as war trophies. The bells, on display at US military camps in Wyoming and Korea, have been the subject of several unsuccessful retrieval attempts by the Philippine government. The return of the relics is the last issue of contention between the US and the Philippines related to the Fil-Am War.

The book is available at leading bookstores. Call 928-8046 or 927-5982.



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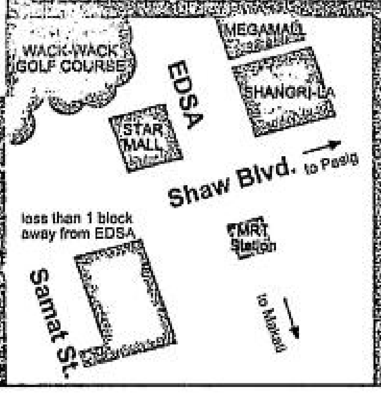
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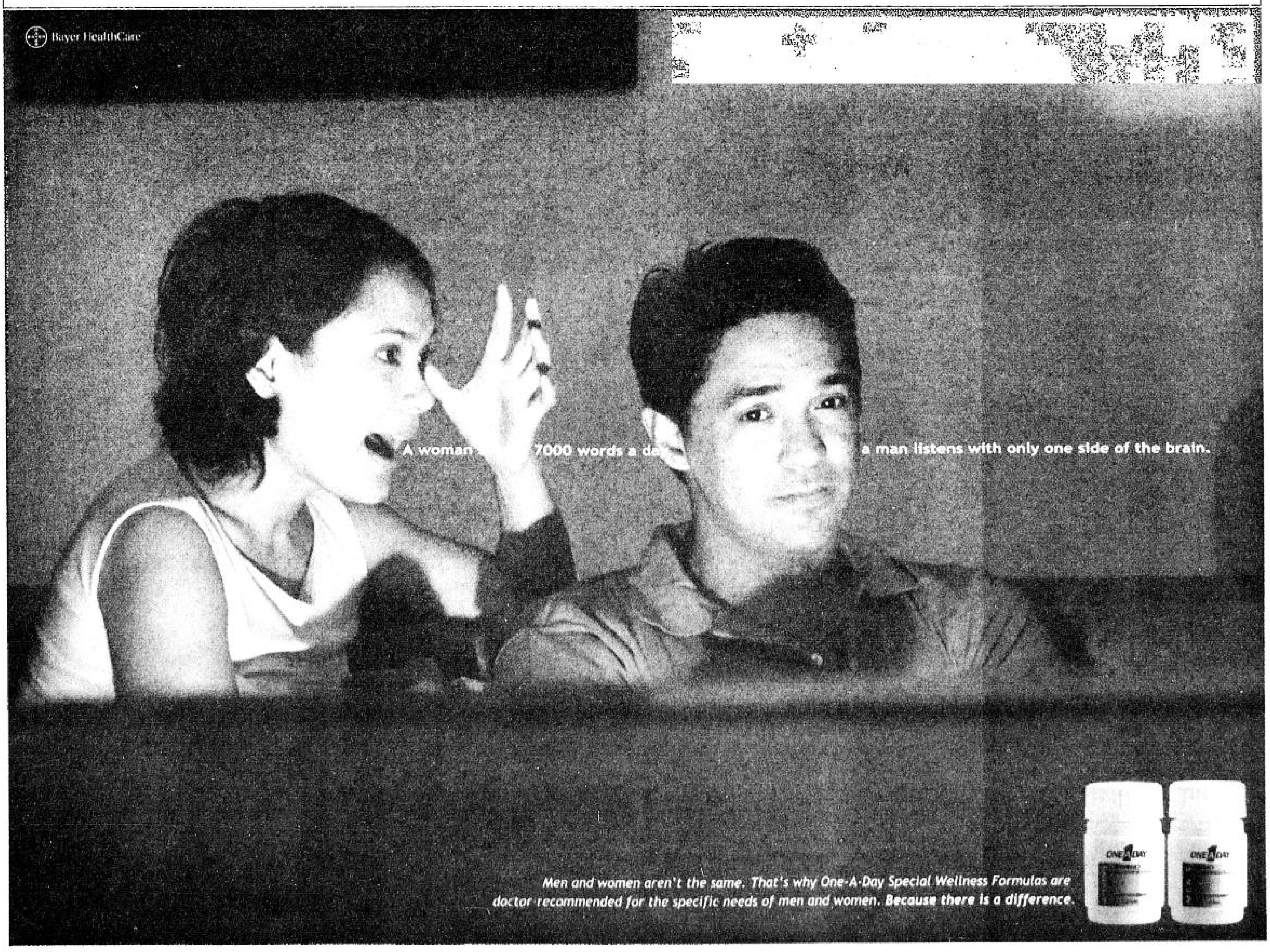
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